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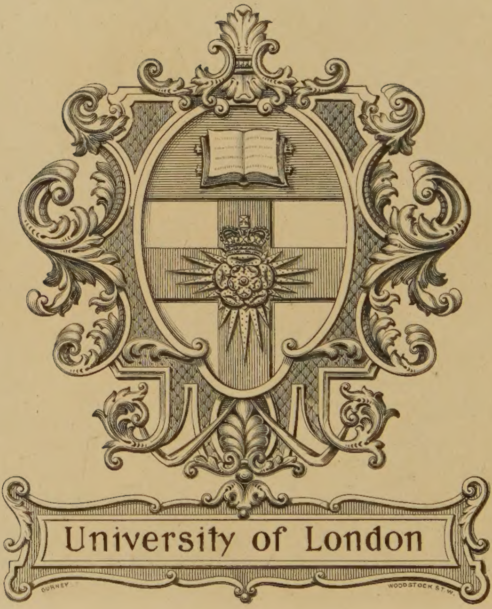
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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIRST SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

6 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLIV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE NINETEENTH DAY OF MARCH
TO THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF MARCH 1906.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION.

1906.

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Scottish Union and National Insurance Company [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table. 1

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—

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That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Heacham Water Bill, Romford and District Tramways Bill, ought to be dispensed with.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London United Tramways Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct the tramways proposed to be authorised be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the West Yorkshire Tramway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Tramway No. 10 be struck out of the Bill.

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That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Tramway No. 3B be struck out of the Bill.

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Army (Imperial Yeomanry).—

Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 4

Metropolitan Cattle Market.—An account of moneys received and paid by the Chamberlain of the City of London for the year 1905, also an account of extraordinary works executed other than general repairs for the same period 4

Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891 (Conditional Licence).—Licence granted by His Majesty to William Watson under the Acts, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864. 5

Factory and Workshop (Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries.—Regulations, dated 26th February, 1906, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of the processes of spinning and weaving flax and tow, and the processes incidental thereto 5

Prisons (Scotland).—Regulation, dated 17th March, 1906, made by the Secretary for Scotland, under the Penal Servitude Act, 1891, Section 8, for the measuring and photographing of prisoners 5

Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896 (Motor Car Act, 1903).—Order by the Secretary for Scotland, dated 5th March, 1906, prohibiting motor car traffic on a highway in the county of Peebles. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

Sir John Soane's Museum.—Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1906. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

NEW BILLS.

Merchant Shipping Act (1894) Amendment Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, with respect to the carriage of deck-loads in the winter time. Was presented by the Lord Muskerry; Read 1^a; and to be printed. [No. 31.] 5

Naval Prize Bill [H.L.]; **Prize Courts Bill** [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 5

The Militia.

Viscount Hardinge 6
The Duke of Bedford 11
The Under Secretary of State for War (*Earl of Portsmouth*) 15
Lord Raglan 20
Lord Haversham 24
Lord Newton 30
Lord Burghclere 34
The Earl of Donoughmore 36
Lord Monkswell 43
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 44
The Marquess of Lansdowne 47

Judicature Bill [H.L.].—Bill read 3^a (according to Order.)

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 50

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, to leave out from the word 'solicitors' to the word ('to') in line 10, and to insert the words 'one being a member of the Council of the Law Society, and the other being a member of the Law Society and also of a provincial Law Society.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.: Dover Harbour Board Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time 50

Millwall Dock Bill.—North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 51

Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 51

Metropolitan Water Board Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 51

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING).—Petition of the London County Council, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 51

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Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 51

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PETITION.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Albury and Tiddington (two); Aspull; Bardsea; Beeford; Broughton; Chorlton on Medlock (two); Cuddesdon; Eythorne (two); Hawridge (two); Heydon (two); Hull; Kingston upon Hull; Levenshulme; Ollerton (two); Rochford; Shevington; Standish (two); and Sunderland (two); to lie upon the Table 51

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ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of final Report, with Appendix I., of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science (including the Royal School of Mines), and Questions connected therewith [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 51

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Regulation, dated 17th March, 1906, made by the Secretary for Scotland for the measuring and photographing of prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87] .. 52

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WINES IMPORTED.—Return presented, relative thereto, (ordered 28th February; *Sir Edward Clarke*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88] .. 52

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NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Michael Meagher, esquire, junior, for the County of Kilkenny (North Kilkenny Division) 100

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating to the arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [Lords.] .. .. .. : 101

NEW BILLS.

House letting (Scotland) Bill.—"To reform the system of House-letting in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cross; supported by Mr. Findlay, Mr. Robert Duncan, Mr. Watt, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Murray Macdonald, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Younger, and Mr. Munro Ferguson; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 107.] 101

Rating of Machinery Bill.—"To amend the law relating to the Rating of Hereditaments containing Machinery," presented by Mr. Bright; supported by Mr. Barran, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Gill, Sir William Hornby, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Haworth, and Mr. Alfred Scott; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th May, and to be printed. [Bill 108.] 101

Alkali, &c., Works Bill—"To consolidate and amend the Alkali, &c., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892." presented by Mr. John Burns; supported by Mr. Runciman; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 109.] 101

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).—Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House).—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) 101

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SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair].

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

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Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hants, Fareham*) 103
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 112
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Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 117
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Mr. Haldane 144
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 152
Mr. Bellairs (*Lynn Regis*) 159
Mr. Power (*Waterford E.*) 160
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 161

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [3rd ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES 1906–7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

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Debate arising,

Mr. Morton 162
Mr. O'Shee (*Waterford, W.*) 164
Mr. Verney (*Buckinghamshire, N.*) 164
Mr. Brace (*Glamorganshire, S.*) 166
Mr. Fell (*Great Yarmouth*) 167
Mr. Haldane 168
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 170

Mr. J. Ward rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 222 ; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 18.)

Question, "That a sum not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907," put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow. Committee to sit again to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £120,580, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, the sum of £42,855,900 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow. Committee to sit again to-morrow .. 173

SUPPLY [1ST MARCH] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [7th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That 129,000 officers, seamen, and boys be employed for Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, including 19,466 Royal Marines.'"

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to. 173

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SUPPLY [1ST MARCH] REPORT.

Order read, for further consideration of Second Resolution, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,810,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to Officers, Seamen, and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution further considered, and agreed to 174

SUPPLY [7TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY), 1905-6.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for additional expenditure on the following Navy Services, viz.:—

	£
Vote 8. Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, etc.	
Section II. Material - - - - - - -	100,000
Section III. Contract Work - - - - -	100
Vote 10. Works, Buildings and Repairs, etc. - - -	100
Vote 11. Miscellaneous Effective Services - - -	61,000
	161,200
Less Surpluses on other Votes - - - - -	161,100
	100

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,954,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Works, Buildings and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907."

"That a sum not exceeding £820,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Half Pay, Reserved, and Retried Pay, to Officers of the Navy and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907."

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,256,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

"That a sum, not exceeding £383,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Civil Pensions and Gratuities, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolutions agreed to 174

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SUPPLY [15TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution agreed to. 175

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Haldane, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Buchanan, do prepare and bring it in.
Mr. Wyndham 175

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Mr. Haldane 175

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

"To provide, during Twelve Months for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 110.]

Motion made and Question, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. George Whiteley*)—put and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 1906.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT.—Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Friday last that the right of the Viscount Powerscourt to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 177

SAT FIRST.

FRANCIS JAMES, LORD BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

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The EARL OF ILCHESTER sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The DUKE OF SUTHERLAND took the Oath 177

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Hull Joint Dock Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified, and Bill reported, with Amendments 177

Vauclain s Patent Bill [H.L.].—Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [H.L.]; Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 177

Milford Docks Bill [H.L.].—Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons .. 177

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PROCEDURE.—Leave given to the Viscount Selby to attend the Select Committee of the House of Commons (pursuant to message of yesterday), if his Lordship think fit, and his Lordship consenting thereto, a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith 177

BOARD OF EDUCATION (AMENDING ORDER, No. 2.)—Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of the Education Act, 1902 .. 178

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Regulations made by the Lord-Lieutenant in pursuance of the provisions of Section 23 (8) of the Act, dated March 5th, 1906, and instructions with respect to the inspection of estates issued by the Estates Commissioners in acordance therewith 178

LOAN FUND BOARD OF IRELAND.—Sixty-eighth Annual Report, 1905 178

ALIENS ACT, 1905.—Regulations, etc., made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department with regard to the administration of the Aliens Act, 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 178

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Order made by the Council of the borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough; Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 178

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 178

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

The Earl of Donoughmore 183
Lord Monkswell 183
The Marquess of Londonderry 184
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On Question, Bill read 2ª. and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

THE CARRYING OF DECK-LOADS.

Lord Muskerry 186
The Earl of Granard 188

BRITISH TRADE METHODS.

The Earl of Wemyss 190
The Earl of Granard 192

SUNDAY TRADING.

Moved, That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Commons to consider the subject of Sunday Trading—(The Lord Privy Seal) (*M. Ripon*); agreed to. The Lords following were named of the Committee—

D. Northumberland,
E. Beauchamp,
L. Bp. Wakefield,
L. Avebury,
L. Weardale.

Ordered, that such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a chairman.

Then a message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to request them to appoint five Members of that House to be joined with the said Committee pursuant to the Resolution of this House of the 9th instant, and to the Message of the House of Commons of yesterday, signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution 193

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 194

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Private Bills (Petition for Additional Provision) (Standing Orders not Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 194

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 194

Standing Orders.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

"That, in the case of the Shrewsbury Corporation Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

"That in the case of the Cork City Railways and Works Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the London and North Western Railway Company, and the Cork and Macroom Direct Railway Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Council of Cork and the Corporation of the City of Cork be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

"That, in the case of the Hammersmith, City, and North East London Railway Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Corporation of the Hall of Arts and Sciences,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

"That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Hampstead Borough Council,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

"That, in the case of the Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Hampstead Borough Council,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

Resolutions agreed to 194

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 195

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Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of Law; From Accrington (six); Beaumont; Chaldon Herring (two); Chorlton on Medlock (two); Clifton in Salwick (two); Clitheroe; Coton in the Elms; Cornhill on Tweed; Crawshaw Booth (two); Crowell (two); Dawley; Goathurst; Harlton (two); Higham Dykes; Higher Broughton; Hoole; Humshaugh; Jevington (two); Keyingham (two); Kilmington; Knuzden St. Oswald's; Little Barford (two); Little Hulton

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(two); Little Totham; Lullington; Mundesley (two); Manchester; Nelson; Newton; Oswaldtwistle; Pendleton; Pendleton and Mearley; Porthleven; Rawtenstall; St. Oswald's; Salford; Sandford Orcas (two); Scrooby (two); Shiremoor; Tankersley; Thornham; Wentworth, and West Camel; to lie upon the Table 195

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LOAN FUND BOARD (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Sixty-eighth Annual Report, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 196

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903 (REGULATIONS).—Copy presented, of Regulations made by the Lord-Lieutenant in pursuance of the provisions of Section 23 (8) of The Irish Land Act, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 196

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 196

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (CLOSING ORDER, BOROUGH OF STOKE-UPON-TRENT).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' and Hairdressers' Shops within the Borough (by Act]; to lie upon the Table 196

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"Return to show date of launch, displacement, and armaments reduced to one common scale (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 96, of Session 1905)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 197

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

House of Commons (Procedure). That they give leave to the Viscount Selby to attend in order to his being examined as a Witness before the Select Committee appointed by this House on House of Commons (Procedure), his Lordship consenting.

Sunday Trading. That they have appointed a Committee, consisting of five Lords, to join with a Committee of this House to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading, and request this House to appoint an equal number of its Members to be joined with the said Lords 235

NEW BILLS.

Shops Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Hobhouse, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Alfred Scott, Mr. Seddon, and Mr. John Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 111] 235

Allotments (London) Bill.—"To facilitate the provision of Allotments by the London County Council," presented by Mr. John Benn; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 112] 235

Purchase of Land Bill.—"To provide for the Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Mr. George White; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Branch, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Higham, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Money, Mr. Alfred Scott, and Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards; to be read a second time upon Friday 11th May, and to be printed. [Bill 113] 235

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).—Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion on the interruption of Business at this Afternoon's Sitting, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business at this Evening's Sitting.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*) 235

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS.—

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 273

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*).

Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 253
Mr. Havelock Wilson (*Middlesbrough*) 257
Mr. Brace (*Glamorganshire, S.*) 266
Sir Robert Ropner (*Stockton*) 268
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Mr. H. H. Marks (*Kent, Thanet*) 275
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 278
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 280
Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) 286
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 288
Mr. Lloyd-George 291

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901, and that Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Kearley, and Mr Runciman do prepare and bring it in.

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—" To amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 114.]

SUPPLY [19TH MARCH] REPORT.—Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.—" That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 295
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 298
Mr. Power (*Waterford, E.*) 302
Mr. O'Shee (*Waterford, W.*) 303
Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny, S.*) 304
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 305
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 305

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Midland Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 306
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 307

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out the word ' now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words ' upon this day six months.' "—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 308
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 309

Mr. Myer (*Lambeth, N.*) 309
The Chairman of Committees (*Mr. Emmott, Oldham*) 310
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 312

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 202 ; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 19.)

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 237 ; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 20).

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Great Northern Railway Bill (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Morton 315
Sir Howard Vincent 318

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out the word ' now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words ' upon this day six months.' "—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Motion made, and Question put, " That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

The House divided : Ayes, 137 ; Noes, 166. (Division List No. 21.)

Question again proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

Mr. Duffy (*Galway, S.*) 323
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 330

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That, in the opinion of this House, the revenues of Trinity College, Dublin, are not used to the best advantage for the promotion of the higher education of the Irish people, and that, in view of the deplorable condition of higher education in Ireland, it is of vital and urgent importance that the control and administration of these large revenues should be so altered as to make them available for the use of the general body of the nation."—(*Mr. Duffy.*)

Mr. Campbell (Dublin University) 332
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 336
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 340
Sir Edward Carson (Dublin University) 341

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS, ETC.—Select Committee appointed to inquire into the number, bulk, cost, and circulation of the documents printed by Order of this House, or presented to it through public departments, and to report what reductions, if any, can be made thereon.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Victor Cavendish, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Maddison, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, and Mr. Toulmin.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*) .. 341

CABS AND OMNIBUSES (METROPOLIS).—Select Committee appointed to inquire into the following questions relating to Cabs and Omnibuses in the Metropolis:—(1) The means to be adopted to prevent the use of drivers' and conductors' badges and licences by unlicensed persons, and the fees charged for those badges and licences; (2) the restrictions imposed on Cabs when not carrying passengers; (3) the restrictions imposed by railway companies on the admission of Cabs to their premises; (4) the structural requirements to be enforced with regard to Cabs and Omnibuses driven by mechanical power; (5) The scale of Cab fares, and particularly the question of the extension of the four-mile radius, and modifications (if any) to be made in the case of Cabs carrying taxameters.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Armitage, Mr. Allen Baker, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. G. A. Gibbs, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, Mr. Keswick, Mr. Lambton, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Norman, Mr. Partington, Sir Samuel Scott, Mr. Stanger, Mr. Steadman, and Mr. Wiles.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*) 341

SUPPLY [19TH MARCH] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [20th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907.'"

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 342

Question put, and agreed to.

Ways and Means [19th March].

Resolutions reported; 1. "That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £120,580 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom." 2. "That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, the sum of £42,855,900 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. McKenna.

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill.—"To apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the years ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and six and one thousand nine hundred and seven," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time this day 344

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

New Writs.—For County of Suffolk (North Eastern or Eye Division), in room of Francis Seymour Stevenson, esquire (Manor of Northstead).

Borough of Leicester.—Henry Broadhurst, esquire (Chiltern Hundreds)—*(Mr. George Whiteley)* 345

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heacham Water Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed .. 345

Edinburgh Corporation Bill.—"To authorise the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh to make and maintain Tramways; to construct works and acquire lands; to incorporate the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, Edinburgh; to provide for the registration of employment agencies; to amend the Edinburgh Municipal and Police Acts; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 345

Burry Port Gas and Improvement Bill.—Order [27th February] that the Burry Port Gas and Improvement Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—*(The Deputy Chairman)* 345

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Divorce Bills.—Ordered, That the Select Committee on Divorce Bills do consist of the following Members—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Joseph Leese, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. D. Brynmor-Jones, Sir Edward Carson, and Mr. G. Cave.—(*Mr. Attorney-General*) 345

PETITIONS.

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LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Donside, in favour; to lie upon the Table 346

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Contempt of Court (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, May 4th, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn. 398

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 398

NEW BILLS.

Aliens Bill,—" To amend The Aliens Act, 1905," presented by Mr. O'Grady; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 115.] 398

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.) 399

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'this House declines to proceed with the Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill without an assurance from His Majesty's Government that they will recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire and report on the economic and moral effects of the system of Indentured Labour at present in operation in the Transvaal.'" —*(Mr. Chamberlain.)*

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 418
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 430
Mr. Cawley (Lancs., Prestwich) 433
Mr. Boulton (Hants, Ramsay) 435
Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing) 437
Mr. Seddon (Lancashire, Newton) 440
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 444
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 454

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 378; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 22.)

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Police Superannuation Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 463
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorks., Cleveland) 463

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

South Africa (High Commissioner).

Mr. Byles (Salford, N.) 464
Mr. Mackarness (Berks., Newbury) 469

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House expresses its disapproval of the conduct of Lord Milner, as High Commissioner of South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal, in authorising the flogging of Chinese labourers in breach of the law, in violation of treaty obligations, and without the knowledge or sanction of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."—(*Mr. Byles.*)

Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.) 474
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 487

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'House' to the end of the Question, and insert the words 'while recording its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in breach of the law, desires, in the interests of peace and conciliation in South Africa, to refrain from passing censure upon individuals'"—(*Mr. Churchill*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 500
Mr. Rufus Isaacs (Reading) 505

Mr. J. Chamberlain rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put accordingly, and negatived.

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Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided :—Ayes, 355 ; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 23.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House, while recording its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in breach of the law, desires, in the interests of peace and conciliation in South Africa, to refrain from passing censure upon individuals."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

Factory and Workshop Bill.—Bill to amend the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Tennant, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Steadman, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Mr. Wilkie

Factory and Workshop Bill.—" To amend the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Thursday 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 116.] 511

Merchandise Marks Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Objection was again taken and the Second Reading was deferred .. 511

Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland(Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Question, "That this Bill be now read a second time," put and agreed to. Bill read a second time and Committed for this day 512

Adjourned at twenty-four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1906.

EARL OF BESSBOROUGH.—Petition of Edward, Earl of Bessborough, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Ponsonby of Syonsby in the Peerage of England, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland ; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House 513

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Rugby Subordinate School Bill [H.L.] ; London Squares and Enclosures Bill [H.L.] ; Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.] ; Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table 513

Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 513

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 513

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Standing Orders Committee.—

Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that the First Schedule be amended by the omission of properties numbered 28, 29, 30, and 31 in the parish of St. Leonard, Hythe, and of the properties numbered 6, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, and 31 in the parish of Sandgate.

Read, and agreed to 513

Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 513

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 8th and 13th instant discharged, and Bill committed 514

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]—Read 2^{a}, and committed 514

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 514

West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.], Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; read 2^{a}, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committees of Selection 514

Thames Deep Water Dock (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 514

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.]; read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection .. 514

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Education.—Petitions in favour of denominational religious education in schools; of teachers and parents and guardians of children in Yealand Conyers National School; St. Peters, Oldham; Smithhills Dean; Ellesmere School; Little Hutton, St. John Baptist; Crawshawbooth National School; Lower Darwen St. James Guide; read and ordered to lie on the Table .. 514

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Charity Commission.—Fifty-third Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales 515

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MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND AND WALES).—General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1905 515

TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.—Letter of instructions to the Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire and report upon certain matters connected with the future constitutions of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony 515

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended December 31st, 1905, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with the reports of inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. Part I. Returns of accidents.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 515

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1879.—Irish Teachers Pension Rules, 1906. 515

SUPERANNUATION.—

1. Treasury Minute, dated March 15th, 1906, declaring Aden and its vicinity an unhealthy district for the purposes of the Superannuation Acts, 1859 and 1876.

2. Treasury Minute, dated March 15th, 1906, modifying Treasury Minute of May 27th, 1884, as to addition of years for purpose of pension to actual length of service of persons appointed to the office of clerk of the Upper Division in the Charity Commission 515

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.—Account of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years, transferred, and of all sums of money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years which have been granted for the same, and contracts for payments on death which have been made within the year ended January 5th, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 516

NEW BILLS.

Public Trustee Bill [H.L.] (No. 32).—A Bill to provide for the appointment of a public trustee, to amend the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896, and otherwise to amend the law relating to the administration of trusts,

Criminal Appeal Bill [H.L.] (No. 33).—A Bill to amend the law respecting appeals in criminal cases.

Were presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed 516

Lord Tweedmouth and Chinese Labour.

The Earl of Donoughmore 516
The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Tweedmouth) 516

The Standing Orders.

The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Onslow) 517

Moved, That the Standing Orders be amended as follows: 97. The Chairman of Committees and such other Lords as shall be named by the House shall be appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Local Bill or Provisional Order Confirmation Bill, and shall appoint the Chairman of such Committee, and shall name the Bill or Bills which shall be taken into consideration on the first or any later day of meeting of such Committee. If a vacancy occur in any such Select Committee in the interval between any two sittings of the House the Chairman of Committees may appoint a Lord to fill such vacancy, and in such case shall report the same to the House at the next sitting—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Standing Order amended accordingly; to be printed as amended (No. 34).

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]—[Second Reading].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Hylton 518

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Hylton.*)

Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 526
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (Earl of Carrington) 528
Lord Burghclere 530

On Question, Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Limited Partnerships Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order).

Bill passed through Committee and reported to the House without Amendment.

Moved, that the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The Earl of Halsbury 534
Lord Avebury 534

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn. Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

Public Libraries Acts (Extension) Bill [H.L.]—[Second Reading].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord James of Hereford 532

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord James of Hereford.*)

The Earl of Camperdown 534

Amendment moved—

"To omit the word 'now' in order to insert at the end of the Motion these words 'this day six months.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Earl Carrington 537
Lord Belper 537
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice* 539
Lord James of Hereford 542

Moved, "That the debate stand adjourned."—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

Lord Belper 543
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 543
The Earl of Camperdown 543
Lord James of Hereford 544

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIENS ACT.—

Lord Newton 544
Earl Beauchamp 550
The Earl of Halsbury 553
Lord Fitzmaurice 555
The Earl of Donoughmore 563
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 565
The Earl of Camperdown 567
The Marquess of Ripon 567

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 22ND MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 569

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 66 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions

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for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders 66 and 67 have not been complied with, viz. :—Cork Link Railways Bill; Cork and Waterford Railways Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 569

Millwall Dock Bill; North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. Read the third time, and passed 569

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).—Sir JOHN DICKSON POYNDER reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday, 24th April, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 569

Dowlais Gas Bill; Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 569

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A).—Mr. H. J. TENNANT reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills; That Mr. F. W. Verney, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table 569

Mr. H. J. TENNANT reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, at Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 570

Cork City Railways and Works Bill, Report [10th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) 570

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—They they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Milford Docks Company to extend the time limited for the completion of certain works; to enable the Company to acquire land compulsorily; and for other purposes." [Milford Docks Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the capital of the Crystal Palace Company and to empower them to raise additional capital." [Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for authorising the Kidderminster Gas Light and Coke Company to alter their name, to construct new gas works, to provide for the conversion and consolidation of certain of their existing capital, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords] 570

Milford Docks Bill [LORDS]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 570

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Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—Petitions in favour; From Abercarn; Abersychan; Abertillery: Abram; Airdrie; Alloa; Altrincham; Alva; Alyth; Anglesey; Annfield; Annan; Anstruther; Easter; Arbuthnot; Ardrossan; Arklow; Arlecdon and Frizington; Armagh; Ashton in Makerfield; Ashton-under-Lyne; Aspull; Auchterarder (two); Auchtergaven; Ayr; Balbriggan; Balfron; Ballybay; Ballycastle; Ballymena; Baltinglass; Banbridge; Bandon; Barmouth; Barrowford; Barrow-upon-Soar; Barry; Barton-upon-Humber; Bathgate; Battersea; Beckenhm; Bedweltry; Belfast; Belford; Benholm; Billesdon; Billinge; Bingley; Birkenhead; Birstall; Blackburn; Blackford; Blaenavon; Blairgowsie (two); Blantyre; Blaydon; Bodmin; Bolton; Bolton-upon-Dearne; Bonhill; Bothwell; Bounemouth; Bower; Bradford (two); Bray; Brechin; Brecknock; Bridlington; Brighouse; Briton Ferry; Brynmawr; Burnley; Burton-upon-Trent; Bury (two); Cadder; Caerphilly; Callander; Calverley; Cambuslang; Cambusnethan; Campsie; Canisbay; Cardross; Carlow; Carluke; Carrickfergus; Cashel (two); Castleblayney; Castleford; Cathcart; Cavan; Celbridge; Chapel en le Frith; Chester le Street; Chingford; Chipping Norton; Chipping Wycombe; Chiswick; Clackmannan; Cleator Moor; Cleethorpes with Thrunscoe; Clonakilty; Clonmel; Coatbridge; Colne; Colwyn Bay and Colwyn; Congleton; Connah's Quay; Cowdenbeath; Crediton; Crewe; Crieff; Crompton; Croydon; Cumnock and Holmhead; Dalry; Dalserf; Dalton-in-Furness; Dalkey; Dalziel; Darvel; Denny; Denny and Dunipace; Desborough; Devonport; Dewsbury; Dornoch (two); Drogheda; Droylsden; Dublin; Dunbarton (two); Dumfries; Dunblane; Dundalk; Dundee (two); Dunfanaghy; Dunfermline (two); Dunnet; Dunstable; Durness; Eastwood; Eday; Edmonton; Egremont; Enniscorthy; Enniskillen; Eyemouth; Falkirk; Failsworth; Fareham (two); Farnworth; Farsley; Fenny Stratford; Fenton; Festiniog; Firth; Flint; Fleetwood; Forehoe; Forres; Fraserburgh (two); Fulham; Galashiels; Galston; Gateshead; Glasgow (two); Glassford; Glossop; Gorton; Gourock; Govan (two); Grangemouth; Greasbrough; Great Harwood; Greenock; Hale; Halifax; Hamilton (two); Hampton; Harrington; Hartlepool; Haslingden; Hasting; Haydock; Hayfield; Hazel Grove and Brambull; Heaton Norris; Hebburn; Heage; Hendon; Hessle; Heysham; Heywood; Hinckley; Holmfirth; Holsworthy; Holyhead; Hoylake; Holywell; Holywood; Hoole; Horwich; Houghton le Spring; Hoylandswaine; Huchnall and Hirthwaite; Huddersfield; Hunslet; Hurst; Ince in Makerfield; Inveresk; Isle of Wight; Itchen; Keigley; Keith; Kenmare; Kennoway; Kettering; Kettle; Kilbarchan; Killarney; Kilbrandon and Kilchattan; Kilfinan; Kilmacolm; Kilmallock; Kilmarnock; Kilmory; Kilmuir Easter; Kingarth; Kingoldrum; Kingston upon Hull; Kingstown; Kirkburton; Kirkby in Ashfield; Kirkcaldy; Kirkcaldy and Dysart; Kirriemuir; (two); Ladybank; Lanark (two); Largs; Larne; Leadgate; Leek; Lees; Leith; Lepton; Leven; Levenshulme; Leyton; Limavady; Liskeard; Lismore (two); Littleborough; Little Hulton; Llandrinod Wells; Llandudno; Llanelly; Llanfairfechan; Llangefni; Llanrwst; Lochmaben; Logie Pert; Longton; Lurgan; Luton; Lymington; Lytham; Maesteg; Mains and Strathmartine; Mauchline; Mansfield; Market Rasen; Marple; Maryport; Meltham; Menai Bridge; Merthyr Tydfil; Middleton; Middlewich; Midgley; Mold; Montrose; Morpeth; Moulin; Mountain Ash; Mytholmroyd; Nantwich; Narberth; Navan (two); Neilston; Nelson; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; New Cumnock; Newmill; New Mills; New Monkland; Newport (Fife); Newry (two); Newton

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for orders under The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, Section 26, authorising land to be taken on lease compulsorily for Allotments during the year ended the 15th day of May, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 227, of Session 1905).—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*) 574

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to consolidate, with Amendments, the Enactments relating to Naval Prize of War." [Naval Prize Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for amending the Law relating to the Administration of Oaths for the purpose of Proceedings in Prize Courts." [Prize Courts Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Judicature Acts, 1873 to 1894, with respect to the Persons in whom the power of making Rules of Court under those Acts is vested." [Judicature Bill [Lords] 644

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).—First Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix, brought up and read; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89.] 644

NEW BILL.

Municipal Corporations Bill.—"To amend The Municipal Corporation Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Henry Vivian; supported by Mr. Russell Rea, Mr. Charles Fenwick, and Mr. Maddison; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 117.] 645

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. Murphy (*Kerry, E.*) 645
Mr. Hazleton (*Galway, N.*) 653

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for education in Ireland in all its branches (primary, secondary, and University) is insufficient and unsatisfactory, and that the interests of the Irish people have been and are suffering most ruinous injury from the long delay in applying a remedy'—(*Mr. Murphy*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Butcher (*Cambridge University*) 658
Mr. Dillon (*Mayo, E.*) 666
Mr. Massie (*Wiltshire, Cricklade*) 677
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 684
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 690
Mr. Clancy (*Dublin Co., N.*) 695

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Waterford Corporation and Bridge Bill (BY ORDER.)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 696
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 697

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.' "—(*Mr. Thomas Corbett.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 698
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 700

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question 22nd March, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for education in Ireland in all its branches (primary, secondary, and university) is insufficient and unsatisfactory, and that the interests of the Irish have been and are suffering most ruinous injury from the long delay in applying a remedy'—(*Mr. Murphy*).—instead thereof."

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Clancy 701
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 707
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.*) 710
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 724

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 728

Whereupon Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put accordingly, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7.—Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do Report Progress; and ask leave to sit again—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to."

Committee Report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next 730

Consolidated Food (No. 1) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next .. 731

Education (Provision of Meals) (Scotland) Bill.—Order for Committee read, and discharged. Bill committed to the Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald*) 731

POST OFFICE (UNITED KINGDOM).—Return ordered, "of the Post Offices, Sub-Post Offices, Telegraph Offices, and Public Telephone Call Offices, which are situated on licensed premises in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales respectively."—(*Mr. Leif Jones*) 731

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. Maddison (*Burnley*) 731
Mr. Gladstone 732
Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmoreland, Appleby*) 732

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1906.

SAT FIRST.—The Lord Ponsonby (E. Bessborough) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 733

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 733

Bethnal Green Borough Council Superannuation Bill [H.L.] Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 733

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.—Annual Report of proceedings under the Tithe Acts, 1836 to 1891, the Copyhold Acts, 1894, the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1899, the Agricultural Holdings Acts, 1883 to 1900, the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts, the Universities and College Estates Acts, 1858 to 1898, the Glebe Lands Act, 1888, and certain other Acts, for the year 1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 733

THE STRANDING OF THE "ORDOVICIAN."—

Lord Muskerry 733
The Earl of Granard 736

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next. a quarter before eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 23RD MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; Lancashire Electric Power Bill; North and South Shields Electric Railway Bill; North East London Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 737

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—South Metropolitan Electric Light and Power Bill; London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time. 737

Thornton Urban District Gas Bill, Watford Gas Bill; Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 737

PETITIONS.

COLTON, WILLIAM GEORGE.—Petition of William George Colton, for redress ot grievances; to lie upon the Table. 737

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table 737

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table 738

LAND VALUATION SCOTLAND ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table 738

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Land Values (Assessment and Rating Bill).—Petitions in favour; from Cromarty; Dawley; Exeter; Liverpool; Manchester; Northwich; Shipley; Skermersdale; Sligo; Stokesley; and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table 738

Land Values Taxation, Etc. (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table. 738

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law; From Askworth; Avon Dassett (two); Bath; Beswick (two); Blackley; Blendworth (two); Blyth; Bolton (two); Bolton le Sands (three); Boyton; Bradford; Brooks's Bar; Bucklesham (two); Buglawton; Burnley; Cardington; Cartmel Fell; Castle Combe (two); Castle Eaton (two); Codicote (two); Congham; Worley; Darlington; Dorney; East Lydford (two); Gidleigh; Gilling East; Great Marlow; Greenside (two); Halwell; Hambledon; Haslingden; Heddington; Helhoughton; Ipsden; Lotton; Lilley; Little Somerford; Maltby le Marsh; Manchester; Mapledurham (two); Matching; Mere; Middleton; Morville; Morville with Aston Eyres; Mossley; Muston; Nettlebed; Newton Hall; Oldham (four); Poole Keynes; Preston Capes; Prestwich; Sheepy Magna (two); Shepnall; Sherfield; Staunton (two); Spittal (two); Stanhoe; Stinchcombe; Sudeley Manor (two); Sutton Montis; Torksey; Wansford (two); West Lilburn; Weston (two); West Raynham; Whitfield; Willey cum Barrow (two); and, Yealand (two); to lie upon the Table 738

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—Petition of the Mining Assocaition of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table 738

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

oard of Education.—Paper [presented 20th March] to be printed. [No. 91.] 739

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy presented, of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Tithe Acts, Copyhold Act, 1894, Inclosure Acts, and other Acts for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 739

Superannuation Acts, 1859 and 1876.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th March, 1906, declaring Changsha to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 739

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

New Battleship at Devonport—Proportion of Dockyard and Contract Works.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 739

No Discharges at Devonport Dockyard.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 740

Avocations of William Ellis of Toomebridge.—Question, Mr. McKean (Monaghan, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 740

Hours of Labourers at the Royal Naval Hospital.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 741

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON NAVAL DOMESTICS.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 741

ABANDONMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ARMOURED CRUISER.—Question, Mr. Ridsdale (Brighton); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 741

LYMPH USED AT NATIONAL VACCINE ESTABLISHMENTS.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn; Answer, Mr. John Burns 742

SHEEP DIPPING IN LANARKSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Menzies (Lanarkshire, S.); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 742

Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill.

Order for Second Reading, read.

Mr. Sutherland (*Elgin Burghs*) 742
Mr. Laidlaw (*Renfrewshire, E.*) 749

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Sutherland.*)

Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 755
Sir Henry Craik (*Glasgow and Aberdeen University*) 765

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs*) 771
Mr. Whittaker (*Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*) 778
Mr. Parker (*Halifax*) 782
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N.*) 784

Mr. SUTHERLAND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 328; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 24.)

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'Now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 333; Noes, 63. (Division List No. 25.)

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 319; Noes, 61. (Division List No. 26.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c."—(*Mr. Sutherland*)—Debate arising.

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And, it being after half-past Five of the Clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned

Debate to be resumed on Monday next.

Naval Prize Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 117.] 804

Whereupon Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at nineteen minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 26th MARCH, 1906.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill had been complied with: Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) [h.l.]. The same was ordered to lie on the table 805

Barry Railway Bill [h.l.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 805

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [h.l.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 805

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [h.l.].—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 805

Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [h.l.].—Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [h.l.]. Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 805

Kent Electric Power Bill [h.l.].—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection .. 805

Vauclain's Patent Bill [h.l.]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [h.l.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 805

Hull Joint Dock Bill [h.l.].—Read 3ª. An Amendment made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 805

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [h.l.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [h.l.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [h.l.]; Barry Railway Bill [h.l.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [h.l.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [h.l.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Belhaven and Stenton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to 805

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated March 19th, 1906, providing for the distribution of the general aid grant 806

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3538. Russia (Trade and Agriculture, Poland and Lithuania).

No. 3539. United States.

No. 3540. Brazil (Trade for the year 1904) 806

CEYLON.—Correspondence relating to elementary education in Ceylon 806

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).—Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland 806

POLICE (SCOTLAND).—Forty-eighth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended December 31st, 1905 .. 806

TURKEY, No. 1 (1906).—Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-eastern Europe. (In continuation of "Turkey, No. 3. (1905).")

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 806

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated March 19th, 1906, declaring Changsha to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876 806

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).—Account for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 806

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Moved, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 19th day of June next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Thursday the 3rd day of May next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 19th day of June next. That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended. That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill later than Thursday the 3rd day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice after Tuesday, the 8th day of May next. That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Tuesday the 8th day of May next."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to 806

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.—

Moved, That the Lords following be added to the Committee, viz.—M. Ripon (*Lord Privy Seal*), D. Bedford, D. Northumberland, M. Lansdowne, E. Lauderdale, E. Rosse, E. Camperdown, L. Balfour, L. Brougham and Vaux, L. Newton.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to 806

Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) Bill [H.L].—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Coleridge 808

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Coleridge.*)

The Earl of Granard 809

On Question, Bill read 2^a and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Criminal Appeal Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 809

Order for Second Reading postponed till to-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]; Milford Docks Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 810

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.; Romford and District Tramways Bill.
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 810

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PRIVATE BILLS (PETITIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for additional Provision in the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.: London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Metropolitan Water Board Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 810

Wallis' Divorce Bil [LORDS]; Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Read a second time, and committed 810

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—Read a second time; and ordered to be considered upon Wednesday 811

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 811

PETITIONS.

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL. —Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table 811

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Prestwich; and Swinford; to lie upon the Table 811

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Accrington; Ashby Parva; Ashwell Thorpe; Ardwincle; Bath; Blymhill; Bolton; Castor; Catterick; Cheriton; Clifton (two); Cound; Crundale (two); Dibden (two); Elton; Elton and Longnewton; Frolesworth; Grinshill; Haltwhistle; Hesketh with Becconsall (two); Hollingwood; Kirkley; Leicester; Little Tew; Llanbalock; Leversal; Lower Hardres (two); Nenthead; Newton-le-Willows; North Brisley; Quidenham; Rockingham; Roggiett; Ruckinge; St. Dunstan's, Canterbury (two); St. Giles, Oxford; St. Leonard (Bucks); St. Leonard with Buckland Common; St. Peter and St. Paul (Lancashire); Salford; Shotton; Slapton (two); Stradbroke (two); Streatham; Sutton-cum-Upton; Tivetshall St. Mary with St. Margaret (two); Upper Clapton; Wadworth; Whitechapel; Winestead (two); and, Yealand Conyers; to lie upon the Table 811

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.—Petition of the Gamekeepers' Association of the United Kingdom, for the inclusion of gamekeepers; to lie upon the Table 811

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).—Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 812

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 19th March, 1906, providing for the distribution of the General Aid Grant [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

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Local Government (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Return of the Areas, Population, and Valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Police (Scotland).—Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Charity Commission (England and Wales).—Copy presented, of Fifty-third Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Vagrancy (Departmental Committee).—Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, Volumes II. and III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 812

Lighthouses, etc. (Local Inspections).—Copies presented, of Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their Inspection of Local Lighthouses, Buoys, and Beacons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 92.] 812

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy presented, of Annual Reports of Proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, &c. for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 813

Turkey (No. 1), 1906.—Copy presented, of Further Correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 813

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3583 to 3540 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 813

Ceylon.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Elementary Education in Ceylon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 813

Prisons (Religious Creed of Prisoners).—Address for "Return showing the declared religious Creeds and Denominations of the prisoners in each of His Majesty's prisons in England, Wales, and Scotland, on the 28th day of March 1906."—(*Mr. Hay Morgan.*) 813

Coolie Labour.—Address for "Return showing (a) the names of the various Colonies or British Possessions in which indentured Coolie Labour is employed, and upon what work, distinguishing the class of Coolie, namely, nationality or tribe; (b) the number of such Coolies respectively; (c) the conditions under which the Coolies are housed or live, whether in fenced or enclosed areas or compounds, or otherwise, and how, stating also whether any and what restrictions are placed upon their individual liberty at times other than when engaged upon their ordinary daily labour; (d) what, if any, regulations exist and are in practice for the punishment of such Coolies respectively for desertion or misconduct, stating the nature of the offence and punishment, and if such regulations and practice have had the sanction of the Government or governing authority of the Colony or Possessions."—(*Mr. Nield.*) 813

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ADMIRALTY CRUISER PROGRAMME.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 814

ABERDEEN RAILWAY STATION.—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 814

ARGENTINE RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVE ORDERS.—Question, Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 815

S.S. "SAINT DUNSTAN."—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 816

OFFICE OF REGISTRAR-GENERAL OF SHIPPING AND SEAMEN.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 816

SICK SEAMEN'S TRANSPORT.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 816

S.S. "IQUIQUE"—CASE OF JOSEPH REY.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 817

SEAMEN'S RECORDS.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 818

IRISH LAND ACT ADMINISTRATION—Questions, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 818

IRISH INLAND FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 819

GERATIES BOAT SLIP.—Question, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 820

KILFINANE SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 820

MAGHERADOWN ESTATE, CAVAN.—Question, Mr. Young (Cavan, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 821

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE NEWCASTLE UNION.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 822

COMMITMENTS FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.—Question, Mr. McHugh (Sligo, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 823

FAIR RENT DISABILITIES.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 823

LAND COMMISSION ANNUITANTS.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 824

WEXFORD OYSTER BEDS.—Question, Mr. Ffrench (Wexford, S.); Answer. Mr. Bryce 824

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ROSCREA EVICTED TENANTS.—Question, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 825

ROSCREA CASTLE.—Question, Mr. T L. Corbett; Answer, Mr. Bryce 825

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SURGEON-GENERAL ROE'S ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 827

POLICE PROTECTION OF DENIS CONNOLLY.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Bryce 827

TIPPERARY POLICE BARRACKS.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Bryce 827

IRISH SUB-COMMISSION—MR. CROASDAILE.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Bryce 828

BLACK MOUNTAIN, GALWAY.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 829

DONEGAL ASSIZE GRAND JURY PANEL.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 829

IRISH EDUCATION—TEXT BOOKS.—Question, Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 830

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EX-SERGEANTS AND THEIR UNIFORM.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 832

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BRITISH GRANITE IN NAVAL WORKS.—Question, Mr. Hay Morgan (Cornwall, Truro); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton) 853

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GENERAL POST OFFICE REGULATIONS—PRIVATE BOX FEES AT WEXFORD.—Question, Mr. Ffrench (Wexford, S.) ; Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 882

CORK COUNTY MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Gilhooly (Cork County, W.) ; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 882

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IRISH DEVOLUTION.—Questions, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) ; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 883

CROFTERS' ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 884

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's), Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) and Mr. Wm. Redmond (Clare, E.) ; Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 884

Wallis' Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with Documents deposited, in the case of Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords] ; and that the Clerk do carry the said Message.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]; and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*) 885

STANDING COMMITTEES.—Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any amended Clause of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. Stuart Wortley.*) 885

NEW BILLS.

Reserve Forces Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the Reserve Forces," presented by Mr. Secretary Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 119.] 885

Seamen's and Soldiers' False Character Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the falsification of Seamen's and Soldiers' certificates of service or discharge, and to false statements made, used, or given in connection with entry or enlistment into His Majesty's naval, military, or marine forces," presented by Mr. Secretary Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 120.] 885

London Municipal Election (Hours of Poll) Bill.—" To extend the Hours of Polling at the election of members of the London County Council and of the Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Dickinson; supported by Mr. Acland-Allen, Mr. Branch, Mr. Waterlow, and Mr. Wiles; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 121.] 886

Petroleum Bill.—" To amend the Petroleum Act, 1879," presented by Mr. J. W. Benn; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Bowerman, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 122.] 886

HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS).—Ordered, That Mr. Fenwick be a Member of the Select Committee on House of Commons (Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 886

Workmen's Compensation Bill.

The Secretary for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) .. 886

Motion made and Question proposed, " That leave be given to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment."—(*Mr. Gladstone*).

Mr. Akers-Douglas (*Kent, St Augustine's*) 895
Mr. Barker (*Penryn and Falmouth* 900
Mr. Barnes (*Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 900
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 906
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) 908
Mr. E. Edwards (*Hanley*) 910
Sir Brampton Gurdon (*Norfolk, N.*) 913
Mr. Havelock Wilson (*Middlesbrough*) 913
Mr. Theodore Taylor (*Lancashire, Radcliffe*) 914
Mr. H. J. Tennant (*Berwickshire*) 916

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Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) 918
Mr. Chiozza Money (*Paddington, N.*) 919
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N*) 920
The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 925
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 928
Mr. J. W. Wilson (*Worcestershire, N.*) 933
Mr. J. Ward (*Stoke-on-Trent*) 933
Mr. Spicer (*Hackney, Central*) 933

Question put and agreed to.

Bill to consolidate and amend the law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Solicitor General, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—" To consolidate and amend the law with reespect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 123].

Police (Superannuation) Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th March], " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N.*) 934
Mr. Samuel Roberts (*Sheffield, Ecclesall*) 936
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 936

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

The Postmaster General (*Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) .. 938
Mr. Claude Hay 938

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate lapsed without Question put.

And the debate on the Second Reading stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

London County Council (Electric Supply) Bill (By Order).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. W. F. D. Smith (Strand, Westminster) 939
(*Mr. Bertram (Hertfordshire, Hitchin)* 943

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Frederick Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Wood (Glasgow, St. Rollox) 944
Mr. Burdett-Coutts (Westminster) 952
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 957
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (Wiltshire Chippenham) 960
Earl Percy (Kensington, S.) 961
Mr. Rowlands (Kent, Dartford) 962
Sir Samuel Scott (Marylebone, W.) 963
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 963
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 963

Amendment by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Post Office (Money Orders) Bill.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question (March 26th), "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.
Mr. Claude Hay 964
Mr. Sydney Buxton 964

Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Wireless Telegraphy Bill.—As amended, considered.

Mr. Claude Hay 965
Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 965

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the word 'twelve,' and insert the word 'eight.'"—(*Mr. Claude Hay*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'twelve' stand part of the Bill."

Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire) 966
Mr. Sydney Buxton 967
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 968
Sir Edward Carson (Dublin University) 970
Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 971

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Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 293; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 27.)

Bill to be read a third time to-morrow.

Consolidated Fund No. 1 Bill.—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a third time."

Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 975
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N. W.) 977

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Army (Annual) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 979

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr Arnold-Forster (Croydon) 981
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 981
Mr Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S) 984
Mr. Paul (Northampton) 985

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 986
Mr. Haldane 986
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 988
Mr. William Rutherford 988

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Lords' Message [20th March], relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Sunday Trading, considered.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Five Members be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by a Lords (as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of 20th March) to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*) 988

And, it being after One of the Clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1906.

EARL OF BESSBOROUGH.—Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Edward, Earl of Bessborough, to vote at the elections of representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 989

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.].—London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Harrowby be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Belhaven and Stenton; read, and agreed to 989

North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments .. 989

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 989

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 989

SCOTTISH PROVIDENT INSTITUTION BUILDINGS, LIMITED.—Petition of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited, under their common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill "to enable the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited, to pay interest out of capital on certain of their shares; and for other purposes," together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the examiners 989

Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 8th instant discharged, and Bill committed 990

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—Brought from the Commons 990

Millwall Dock Bill.—North Metropolitan Tramways Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 990

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Wallis Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the case: Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned 990

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.—Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools: —Of teachers in schools at St. Michaels-on-Wyre, Garstang; Moorside; Church Kirk; St. John's, Bury; Churchtown; Neales; Goosnargh; Wreagreen; Kingley; Stoneclough; Baxendale; St. John's, Bury; Ribby-with-Rea; Treales; Inskip; Walmsley. Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Ribby-with-Rea; Ballarn; Kingley; Stoneclough; Moorside; St. Michaels-on-Wyre; St. John's, Bury; Churchtown; Hesketh-with-Beckensall; Inskip; Whitechapel; Church Kirk; Crawshaw Booth; Baxenden; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 990

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

VAGRANCY.—Minutes of evidence taken by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. Volume II. Minutes of Evidence, digest of evidence, and general index to evidence, appendix, and report.

Appendix to the report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. Volume III. Appendix, with charts and maps 990

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.—Tables showing for each of the years 1900–1905, the estimated value of imports into the United Kingdom, and exports from the United Kingdom of articles of British and Irish production at the prices prevailing in 1900, with an introductory memorandum 991

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.—Annual reports of proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, etc., for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 991

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).—Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their inspection of local lighthouses, buoys, and beacons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 132 of Session 1905) 991

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Order made by the council of the borough of Barnstaple and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough 991

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.—Returns of the receipts and expenditure of the General Medical Council and of the branch councils; also of receipts and expenditure of the Dental Registration Fund, for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 991

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SUNDAY TRADING.—Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have appointed a Select Committee of five members to join with the Select Committee appointed by this House, as mentioned in their Lordships' message of the 20th instant, to enquire into the subject of Sunday Trading .. 991

Limited Partnerships Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Standing Committee with an Amendment. The Report thereof to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 36.) 992

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill.—Read 1^a; and to be read 2^a on Thursday next (The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon.*)) 992

Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) Bill [H.L.]—House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee 992

Criminal Appeal Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 992

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2 ."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*) .. ..

Viscount Cross 997
The Earl of Halsbury 999
Lord James of Hereford 1002
Earl Russell 1006

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

Public Trustee Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor 1010

Moved, "That the Bill be read 2^a."—(*The LordChancellor.*)

The Earl of Halsbury 1010
Lord Faber 1010
Lord Avebury 1011

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

AMERICAN INSURANCE COMPANIES.

The Earl of Onslow 1012
The Marquess of Granby 1017
The Earl of Granard 1018

LAND SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Lord Lovat 1019
The Duke of Westminster 1024
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 1025
Viscount Milner 1030

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 27TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1037

Edinburgh Corporation Bill.—To be read a second time to-morrow 1037

Additional Electrical Power Supply (London) Bill (By Order).—Second Reading deferred till Thursday 1037

Standing Orders.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee —

1. "That in the case of the Poole Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with — That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

2. "That in the case of the Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with.—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clause 27 be struck out of the Bill.—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. "That in the case of the Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with .—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

4. "That in the case of the West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with .—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, providedthat the powers to construct Tramway No. 10 be struck out of the Bill :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

5. "That in the case of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with : —That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 3B be struck out of the Bill :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

6. "That, in the case of the Cork Link Railways Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the Great Western Railway Company, the London and North Western Railway Company, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, the Cork, Bandon and South Coast Railway Company, the Cork, Blackrock and Passage Railway Company, the Cork and Macroom Direct Railway Company, and the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Council of the County of Cork and the Corporation of the City of Cork be struck out of the Bill :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

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7. "That in the case of the Cork and Waterford Railways Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the London and North Western Railway Company, the Great Western Railway Company, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway Company, the Cork, Bandon and South Coast Railway Company, and the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Councils of the Counties of Cork and Waterford be struck out of the Bill, except where proof is given before the Committee on the Bill that Special Meetings of any or all of the said Companies have been held to consider the Bill, or that the Bill has been submitted to and approved by either or both of the said County Councils :—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

Resolutions agreed to 1037

Cork Link Railways Bill.—Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time 1039

Cork and Waterford Railways Bill.—Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time. 1039

Huddersfield Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1039

Message from the Lords.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the granting of superannuation allowances to the officers and servants of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Bethnal Green; and for other purposes." [Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain letters patent granted to Samuel Mathews Vauclain for an invention for improvements in compound steam locomotives." [Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the conversion of the stock of the Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Company, Limited, into five per annum cumulative preference stock, preferred ordinary stock, and deferred ordinary stock; and for other purposes." [Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer additional powers upon the Hull Joint Dock Committee for the construction of dock works, and upon the North Eastern Railway Company for the construction of new railways; and for other purposes." [Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords] .. 1039

Sunday Trading.—That they propose that the Joint Committee, appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading, do meet in Committee Room A on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock 1039

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]; Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1039

PETITIONS.

Diseases of Animals Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1040

Public Elementary Schools (Religious Teaching).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Albrighton; Arthingworth; Ash; Aston cum Aughton (two); Berkley; Birtley (two); Bloxham (two); Box; Brompton; Bury (two); Buxhall; Carsington; Chelwood; Chertsey; Claverley (two); Clipston; Codford St. Mary; Compton; Corston; Courteenhall; Crewkerne (two); Crunwere (two); Darley Abbey (two); Dean; Doddington; Dowlish; Dunton; Eakring; East Hendred; Edgcott (two); Elton; Fordwich (two); Foxley (two); Fressingfield; Great and Little Woolston (two); Halton Shields; Hambledon; Haslebury Bryan; Heaton; Heaton Norris (three); Hindsford; Holy Trinity, Kilburn; Hopton and Griffs Grange; Hordle (two); Hornby (two); Howtel; Hucclecote; Huntley; Kirknewton (two); Leaton; Leigh Delamere; Lever Bridge (two); Lillingstone Lovell (two); Longton (two); Luccombe; Ludgershall (two); Margaretting; Marston Trussell; Maften; Milton Bryan; Milton Keynes (two); Monk Hesleden; Netherton; North Frodingham (two); Pertenhall (two); Pittington (two); Poling (two); Portbury; Prestwich; Ramsbottom; Rodington; Rousham; St. Anne's, Stretford; St. John's, Dukinfield (two); St. Peter's, Cricklewood; Shabbington; Shere (two); Shilbotel; South Ossett (two); Snowshill; Stanton; Stowe (two); Studland (two); Sturry (two); Stinchcombe; Sunnybrow; Swainswick; Tattingstone; Thornbury; Tirley; Tynemouth Priory; Upton Lovell; Upper Slaughter; Wem (two); West Brompton; West Knoyle; Weston; Wickham; Wigginton; Willen; Willington; Winchester (three); and, Woolstone; to lie upon the Table 1040

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Aliens Naturalisation.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 13th March; *Mr. Herbert Samuel*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 93] 1041

Medical Councils.—Accounts presented, for 1905 of the General Medical Council and Branch Councils, and of the Dental Registration Fund [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1041

Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Copy presented, of Orders made by the Council of the Borough of Barnstaple, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1041

Imports and Exports at Prices of 1900.—Copy presented, of Tables showing for each of the years 1900–5 the estimated value of Imports into the United Kingdom and Exports from the United Kingdom, of articles of British and Irish production at prices prevailing in 1900, with an introductory Memorandum [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1041

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MANUFACTURED IMPORTS AND EMPLOYMENT.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th March; *Mr. Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 94] 1041

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901 (HOME WORK).—Address for "Return as to the administration, in each county and county borough during 1904, by the local authorities of the Home Work provisions of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, as shown by the reports of the medical officers of health sent to the Home Office under Section 132 of the Act, giving particularly the following information: (*a*) generally, the number of inspections of home-workers' premises, the number of notices served in respect of them, etc.; (*b*) the number of out-workers' lists received by the local authority under Section 107, and the number of out-workers shown by them; (*c*) the number of notices served by the local authority under Section 108; (*d*) the number of orders made by the local authority under Section 110; (*e*) the number of cases of infectious disease notified in home-workers' premises; (*f*) the number of cases of non-compliance, and the number of prosecutions, under Sections 107, 108, 109 and 110 respectively; and (*g*) the number of medical officers reporting specially on the administration of those sections."—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald*) 1041

EXPORTS TO CHINA AND SOUTH AMERICA.—Return ordered, "showing, so far as can be stated: (1) the Exports to China, inclusive of Hong Kong, from the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States, for the years 1885 to 1904, and the average for each of the quinquennial periods ending 1889, 1894, 1899, and 1904, showing increase in value and percentage between the averages for the first and last periods; (2) a similar Return for the same periods, showing exports to Argentina from the same countries; and (3) a similar Return showing exports from the same countries to the whole of South America."—(*Viscount Turnour*) 1042

IRISH FISHING-BOAT BUILDING.—Return ordered, "showing (1) the number of Fishing Boats built for, and of new Fishing Boats purchased by the Congested Districts Board, the description, tonnage, price, where built, and the dates of their construction to be given; (2) similar information as to the Fishing Boats for the building of which loans have been made to fishermen by the Inspectors of Fisheries (as far as they can supply the information) and by the Department of Agriculture."—(*Sir Thomas Esmonde.*) 1042

DEATHS FROM STARVATION OR ACCELERATED BY PRIVATION (LONDON).—Address for "Return of the number of Deaths in the Administrative County of London, in the year 1905, upon which a Coroner's Jury has returned a verdict of Death from Starvation, or Death Accelerated by Privation, together with any Observations furnished to the Local Government Board by Boards of Guardians with reference to cases included in the Return (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 285, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Talbot*) 1042

UNTENANTED LANDS (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "of Untenanted Lands in rural districts, distinguishing demesnes on which there is a mansion, showing: (1) rural district and electoral division; (2) townland; (3) area in statute acres; (4) valuation (Poor Law); (5) names of occupiers as in valuation lists."—(*Mr. Ginnell*). 1043

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).—Address for "Return showing:—A. The total Military Expenditure, during the last financial year, of (1) the United Kingdom;

(2) India; (3) the self-governing Colonies; (4) other Colonies and Dependencies; (5) the chief Foreign countries; B. The Military Establishments maintained at the cost of the Imperial Exchequer in the various Colonies and Dependencies, and the approximate cost in each case."—(*Mr. Lehmann.*) 1043

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

IRISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE LEAFLETS—AND TUBERCULOSIS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1043

KINVARA MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1044

PROMOTIONS IN BELFAST POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1044

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO TREASURY GRANT TO CORK JUNCTION RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1045

IRISH LAND PURCHASE.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer Mr. Bryce 1045

PORTUGUESE RAILWAY LOAN.—Question, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1047

LABOUR RECRUITING IN BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Rees; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1047

MORTALITY OF WHITE LABOURERS IN TRANSVAAL GOLD MINES.—Question, Mr. Hills (Durham); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1047

ANTHRAX AT MESSRS. CAMPBELL AND HARRISON'S WORKS, BRADFORD.—Question, Mr. Jowett (Bradford, W.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1048

CLOSING OF LICENSED REFRESHMENT HOUSES AT NOTTINGHAM.—Question, Mr. H. J. Wilson (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1049

MINE ACCIDENTS—SPECIAL RESCUE CORPS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1050

HOURS OF CLOSING OF BRITISH MUSEUM READING ROOM.—Question, Mr. Scott (Ashton-under-Lyne); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1050

INCOMES EXCEEDING £2,000 PER ANNUM.—Question, Mr. Grove (Northamptonshire S.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1050

POSTAL DELIVERIES AT MONEYVROE, COUNTY WATERFORD.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1051

TESTING POST OFFICE WEIGHTS AND SCALES.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1051

REPAIRS OF IRISH SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1051

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APPOINTMENT OF FEMALE PUPIL-TEACHERS TO BOYS' SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1052

APPLICATIONS FOR ISSUE OF SCHOOL REQUISITES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1052

SALE OF THOMPSON (CLONFIN) ESTATE.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1053

USE OF TRANSPORT CAR FOR CONVEYANCE OF COUNTY INSPECTOR.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer. Mr. Bryce 1053

ADDITION OF RENT TO PURCHASE PRICE UNDER THE LAND ACT.—Question, Captain Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1054

PAY AND DUTIES OF COLONELS OF FOOT GUARDS.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1054

REPORT OF OUTBREAK OF EPIZOOTIC LYMPHANGITIS AT WATERFORD.—Question. Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1055

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H.M.S. "BRITANNIA—BEAGLING GRANT.—Questions, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1055

OBSOLETE WAR VESSELS.—Questions, Mr. Jenkins (Chatham) and Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1056

WEI-HAI-WEI.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1057

ST. HELENA.—Question, Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1057

WEST INDIAN ISLANDS GARRISONS.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1058

EPIZOOTIC LYMPHANGITIS AT WATERFORD.—Questions, Mr. Power (Waterford, E.); Answers, Mr. Haldane 1058

ROYAL SPARKBROOK SMALL ARMS FACTORY.—Question. Mr. W. T. Wilson (Lancashire, Westhoughton); Answer, Mr. Haldane.. 1059

COLONIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO IMPERIAL DEFENCE.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill Manchester, N.W.) 1059

TRANSVAAL MINING SHARES.—Question, Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1060

ORANGE RIVER CENSUS.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1060

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St. Helena Garrison.—Questions, Mr. Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Churchill 1061

Land Taxation in India.—Questions, Mr. C. J. O'Donnell (Newington, Walworth), Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) and Mr. J. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent); Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Ellis, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) 1061

Tibet.—Question, Mr. Ashley; Answer, Mr. John Ellis 1063

The Open Door in the Congo Basin.—Question, Mr. J. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1063

Congo—British Merchants' Claims.—Question, Mr. J. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1064

Factory Regulations—Precautions against Fire.—Question, Mr. Seddon (Lancashire, Newton); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1064

Waste Land and Afforestation.—Question, Mr. C. Nicholson (York, W.R., Doncaster); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarven Boroughs) 1065

Unemployed and the Distress Committees.—Question, Mr. Thorne (West Ham, S.); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1065

Manchester Unemployed.—Question, Mr. Thorne; Answer, Mr. John Burns 1066

Hayes Sewage Disposal Inquiry.—Questions, Mr. J. Ward; Answers, Mr. John Burns 1066

Shop Assistants and the Living-in System.—Question, Mr. Seddon; Answer, Mr. John Burns 1067

National Telephone Company and the Hull Municipal Telephones.—Questions, Mr. Belloc (Salford, S.); Answers, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1067

Swiss Parcel Post Rates.—Question, Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1068

Bersham (Denbigh) Postal Arrangements.—Question, Mr. Moss (Denbighshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1069

Importation of Store Cattle into the United Kingdom.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 1069

Pupil Teachers' Ring—Holyhead Case.—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1070

The Rotherham Education Committee and Miss Turner.—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Birrell 1071

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TEACHERS AND VACCINATION.—Question, Mr. J. R. Macdonald (Leicester); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1073

NEW GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN WHITEHALL.—Questions, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith), Mr. Thorne and Lord Balcarres (Lancs, Chorley); Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 1074

TEMPORARY CLERICAL ASSISTANTS FOR THE ADMIRALTY.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, The Financial Secretray to the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1075

NATIONAL GALLERIES—CUSTODIAN'S EMOLUMENTS.—Question, Colonel Herbert (Monmouthshire, S.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1075

THE TURCO-EGYPTIAN FRONTIER.—Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cumberland, Cockermouth); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1076

GLASGOW PARISH COUNCIL NURSES.—Question, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) .. 1077

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Sloan and Mr. Keir Hardie; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 1077

IRISH LAND PURCHASE STATISTICS.—Questions, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1077

LETTERKENNY GUARDIANS AND CANADIAN CATTLE.—Question, Mr. Charles MacVeigh (Donegal, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1079

CHANCERY LEASES.—Question, Mr. Sheehy (Meath, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1079

LORD CLANRICARDE'S AGENT AND THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.—Questions, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Bryce 1080

IRISH BUTTER INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1080

INSPECTION OF IRISH CREAMERIES.—Question, Mr. Joyce; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1081

SCULLY ESTATE, KILKENNY.—Question, Mr. Meagher (Kilkenny, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1081

EVICTED TENANTS IN KILKENNY.—Question, Mr. Meagher; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1081

BEET CULTIVATION IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1082

CLOONKEEN TEACHER'S SALARY.—Question, Mr. Edward Barry (Cork County, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1082

FAKED HAMS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Joyce; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1083

MERCHANTS' QUAY, KILRUSH.—Question, Mr. Halpin (Clare, W.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1083

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CORK JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1084

MINISTERS AND COMPANY DIRECTORSHIPS.—Question, Mr. Bright (Oldham); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1085

THE SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.), and Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Speaker 1085

NEW BILLS.

Crown Lands Bill.—" To amend the Crown Lands Act, 1829 to 1894," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 124.] 1086

Dean Forest Bill.—" To authorise the exchange of parcels of waste in the Forest of Dean, and to amend the Dean Forest (Mines) Act, 1904," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 125.] 1086

Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers) Bill.—" To transfer to the Local Government Board the Powers of the Treasury under enactments relating to Local Authorities," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 126.] 1087

Sunday Trading (Scotland) Bill.—" To regulate and control Sunday Trading in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Gulland, Mr. McCallum, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 127.] 1087

Textile Workers (Saturdays and Sundays Holidays) Bill.—" To prohibit employment between noon on Saturday and six o'clock on Monday morning in woollen, worsted, and silk factories," presented by Mr. Jowett; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 128.] 1087

Education of Defective Children (Scotland) Bill.—" To provide for the Education and Conveyance to school of Epileptic and Crippled and Defective Children in Scotland," presented by Mr. Gulland; supported by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Barnes and Mr. Watt; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 129.] 1087

Shop Clubs Act (1902) Amendment Bill.—" To extend the provisions of Section 1 of the Shop Clubs Act, 1902, to membership of Trades Unions and Industrial and Provident Societies," presented by Mr. John Ward; supported by Mr. Steadman, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Brace, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Fenwick and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 130.] 1087

PRIVILEGES.—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Blake, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, Mr. Ellis, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham) were nominated members of the Committee of Privileges.

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Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 1087

Official Publications, Etc.—Ordered, That Mr. W. F. D. Smith be discharged from the Select Committee on Official Publications, etc.

Ordered, That Mr. Bowles be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 1087

Sunday Trading.—Motion made, and Question proposed, That Mr. Haviland Burk be a Member of the Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords on Sunday Trading.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Mr. J. R. Macdonald (*Leicester*) 1088
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1088
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 1088

Amendment proposed—

" That the name of Mr. Gulland be omitted."—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

Mr. Whiteley 1088

Amendment put and negatived, and Motion agreed to.

Sir Henry Kimber and Mr. Stuart Samuel nominated other Members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That two be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Guest (*Cardiff*) 1089
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 1094
Mr. Lambton (*Durham, S. E.*) 1096
Mr. L. Haslam (*Monmouth Boroughs*) 1098
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 1099
Mr. Charles Wilson (*Hull, W.*) 1105
Mr, Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 1105
Mr. Cairns (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 1110
Mr. Havelock Wilson (*Middlesbrough*) 1112
Major Seely (*Liverpool, Abercromby*) 1125
Sir Robert Ropner (*Stockton*) 1127
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1128
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 1138
Mr. Harmood Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 1141
Mr. Jenkins (*Chatham*) 1142

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

Wireless Telegraphy Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Dogs Bill.—Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 1143
Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 1144
Mr. Marnham (Surrey, Chertsey) 1145
Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.) 1146
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 1146
Sir Edward Carson (Dublin University) 1147
Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 1147
Mr. Wm. Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 1148

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trades, etc.

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir H. Aubrey-Fletcher (Sussex, Lewes) 1148

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

Mr. Scott (Ashton-under-Lyne) 1149
Mr. Idris (Flint Boroughs) 1154

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to withdraw from the Sugar Convention."—(*Mr. Alfred Scott*).

Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire, N.W.) 1158
Mr. Paul (Northampton) 1165
Mr. R. Duncan (Lanarkshire, Govan) 1167
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (Wiltshire, Chippenham) 1167
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1168

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Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'inasmuch as the Brussels Convention is binding on the contracting Powers for a period of five years, and that any notice on behalf of a contracting State to withdraw is subject to twelve months' notice, to be given in September 1907, it is inexpedient for this House to announce any decision at this moment.'—(*Sir John Dickson-Poynder.*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Earl Percy (*Kensington, S.*) 1169
The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1173
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 1177
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs*) 1184

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Army (Annual) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1186
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 1187

Question put, and agreed to

Clause 2

Motion made, and Question proposed,' "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Col. Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 1188
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 1188
Mr. Forster (*Kent, Sevenoaks*) 1189
Mr. Claude Hay 1190
Mr. Forster 1190
Col. Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newbury*) 1192
Mr. Rawlinson (*Cambridge University*) 1195
Mr. Claude Hay 1195
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 1198
Col. Kenyon-Slaney 1199

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Mr. Haldane 1200
Mr. Claude Hay 1201
Mr. Lane Fox (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash*) 1202
Mr. Wm. Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 1204

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 195 ; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 28.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

Sir A. Acland-Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) 1209

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Haldane 1210
Lord Balcarres (*Lancs., Chorley*) 1210
Mr. William Rutherford 1212
Mr. Claude Hay 1212
Captain Baring (*Isle of Wight*) 1214
Lord Turnour (*Sussex, Horsham*) 1214
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 1214
Mr. Joyce (*Limerick*) 1215
Mr. Haldane 1216
Lord Balcarres 1216
Lord Castlereagh (*Maidstone*) 1216

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 5 :

Amendment proposed—

" To omit Sub-section 1."—(*Lord Balcarres.*)

Question proposed, " That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Haldane 1218

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Lord Turnour 1218

Amendment proposed—

" In page 5, line 10, after the word ' The ' to insert the word ' Imperial.' "—(*Viscount Turnour.*)

Question put, " That the word ' Imperial ' be there inserted."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 22 ; Noes, 181. (Division List No. 29.)

Mr. WHITLEY rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put," but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Mr. William Rutherford 1221

MR. HALDANE claimed, " That the Question ' That the Clause stand part of the Bill ' be now put."

Question put, " That the Question ' That the Clause stand part of the Bill ' be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 181 ; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 30.)

Question put accordingly, " That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 180 ; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 31.)

Clause 6 :

Amendment proposed—

" In page 5, line 26, to leave out the word ' prescribed.' "—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' prescribed ' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. Haldane 1225
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 1226

Mr. SEDDON rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put ; " but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question, as it appeared to him that the Committee was prepared to come to a decision without that Motion.

Question put, " That the word ' prescribed ' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 178 ; Noes, 21. (Division List No. 32.)

Clause 7 :—

Mr. William Rutherford 1229
Clause agreed to.

Clauses 8, 9, and 10 agreed to.

New Clauses :

Mr. William Rutherford 1229
Mr. Haldane 1229
Colonel Legge 1229
Mr. Haldane 1230
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 1230
Mr. Haldane 1230

New clause (Abolition of fines)—(*Mr. Hunt*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question put, " That the clause be read a second time."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 25 ; Noes, 173. (Division List No. 33.)

Schedule :—

Mr. Keir Hardie 1233
Mr. Haldane 1233
Mr. William Rutherford 1233
Mr. Seddon 1234
Major Seely 1234
Lord Balcarres 1234
Mr. Haldane 1235
Captain Baring 1235
Mr. Brace (Glamorgan, S.) 1235
Mr. Keir Hardie 1235
Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck) 1235
Colonel Herbert (Monmouthshire, S.) 1236
Lord Turnour 1236
Mr. Morton 1236

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time to-morrow.

And, it being after One of the Clock, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Five o'clock a.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 28TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 1237

London United Tramways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 1237

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered ; to be read the third time upon Friday 1237

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A).—Mr. Harold Tennant reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, they had further adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1237

Dean Forest Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Dean Forest Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. McKenna.*) 1237

Crown Lands Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Crown Lands Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. McKenna.*) 1237

Midland Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1237

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 3).—Mr. Charles Allen reported from the Committee on Group 3 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 4th April, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1237

Bacup Corporation B .—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 1237

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, against; to lie upon the Table .. 1238

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of law: from Adderbury (two); Ardwick; Axbridge; Badgeworth; Bath; Beaconsfield; Beckingham; Berrick; Bircle (two); Birkenhead; Bolton; Brent Knoll; Brettenham; Bridestowe; Brockley Hill (two); Bulley; Burnham; Burnley; Burrington; Bylaugh (two); Charnock Richard (three); Chorlton on Medlock; Clayton le Woods; Darwen; Disserth (two); Duntisbourne Abbots (two); Easterton; East Walton; Eccleston (two); Esh; Farington (two); Fence (two); Foxcote; Fritton; Gainsborough; Great Cheverell; Great Harwood; Greetham (two); Grimoldby; Harpsden; Hartburn; Harwood (two); Hellifield (two); Heskin Pemberton; Higher Walton (two); Holbrook; Hoole; Horsted Keynes (two); Hulme (three); Hurst Green; King's Langley; Lambley; Leverington; Lewisham; Little Gransden; London; Longhope; Long Wittenham; Manby; Manchester; Markbeech (two); Mawdesley (three); Mitford; Monkton Combe (two); Muston; Norton; Oddington; Orston; Oswaldkirk; Ovingham; Ovington; Plympton St. Maurice (two); Ponteland; Preston; Prittlewell (two); Reymerston; Ringley (two); Rockfield; Rushford; Sowerby (two); Standish; Staunton; Stow Longa with Easton; Stretham with Thetford (two) Thorpe; Turton; Twineham; Walmsley; Walton; Walton le Dale (three); West Hoathly; Weston; Weston-super-Mare; Whalley Mange; Whatley (two); Wheatenhurst; Whittle le Woods (two); Whitwell; Witchford; Woolston and Sholing; and Yockleton; to lie upon the Table 1238

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (NAVY VOTES).—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th March, 1906, authorising the temporary application of surpluses on certain Navy Votes for the year 1905–6 to meet excesses on other Navy Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 95.] 1239

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ARMY VOTES).—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th March, 1906, authorising the temporary application of surpluses on certain Army Votes for the year 1905–6 to defray excesses on other Army Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 96.] 1239

COLONIES (GENERAL).—Copy presented, of Statement of Present Contributions to the Imperial Institute made by the Government of India and by the British Colonies and Protectorates [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1239

EXPLOSIONS (NETHER WALLSTEAD).—Copy presented, of Report by Captain M. B. Lloyd, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at Nether Wallstead, near Hayward's Heath, Sussex, on the 26th October, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1239

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) RETURNS.—Copy presented, of Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for the year 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1239

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th March; *Mr. Nannetti*] to lie upon the Table 1239

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).—Order [6th March] for an Address for a Return relative to Colonies (Colonial Acts, Royal Assent, read, and discharged; and, instead thereof:— 1239

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).—Address for "Return of the names of Bills or Acts passed by both Houses of the Legislature in Colonies possessing responsible Government, since the date of the House of Commons' Return, No. 362, of 1901, which have not come into operation, either because His Majesty's Assent has not been given, or because the Acts have been disallowed."—(*Colonel Legge.*) 1240

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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S.S. "CUMBAE"—CASE OF HUGH MCGARVIE.—Question, Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1240

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SIR JOHN NUGENT HUMBLE'S ESTATE.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1243

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BALLYDECANE EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1244

CAPPAWHITE POLICE TRANSPORT CAR.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1245

IRISH GOVERNMENT DREDGER—BALLYNESS HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1246

DUNFANAGHY LUNACY CERTIFICATE FEE.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1247

NATIVE RESERVATIONS IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1247

NATIVE RISING IN NATAL.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1248

PEMBROKE DOCKYARD DISCHARGES.—Question, Mr. Phillips (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1249

SHEDS IN ROYAL DOCKYARDS.—Question, Lieutenant-Colonel Philipps (Southampton); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1249

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IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Delany Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1250

LONGFORD POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1250

TRISTAN DA CUNHA MAILS.—Question, Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1251

FRUIT INDUSTRY—CONSOLIDATION OF ACTS.—Question, Mr. Napier (Kent, Faversham); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1251

HORTICULTURAL INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Napier; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1252

PUBLICATION OF RAILWAY COMPANIES RUNNING POWERS.—Question, Mr. Straus (Tower Hamlets, Mile End); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1252

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MORTALITY IN PRISONS.—Question, Sir H. Cotton (Nottingham, E.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1254

VACCINATION EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE.—Question, Mr. Herbert (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1255

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VOLUNTEER MEDICAL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1257

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THREAT TO CLOSE JOHANNESBURG MINES.—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answers, Mr. Churchill 1260

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SCOTTISH EDUCATION CODE.—Question, Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire).. 1267

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REFUSALS AND ADVANCES.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1269

POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.—Question, Mr. Halpin (Clare, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1270

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CROOKENDEN AND CASEY ESTATE, COUNTY CAVAN.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1281

IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT — TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.—Questions, Mr. Vincent Kennedy, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.), Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.), Mr. Vincent Kennedy and Sir Edward Carson; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1282

IRISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Captain Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1284

GRANTS TO IRISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. A. Roche (Cork); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1284

MACROOM DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THE ESTATES COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1285

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PAUPER LUNATIC CHARGES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Charles McVeigh (Donegal, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1287

LETTERKENNY AND STRANORLAR DISTRICT COUNCIL.—Questions, Mr. Charles McVeigh; Answers, Mr. Bryce 1287

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STAMP DUTY ON PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1288

SIGNATURES IN IRISH FOR THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1288

ENNISKILLEN POST OFFICE—FEES ON CALLERS' LETTERS.—Question, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1289

SCOTTISH SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1289

TIME LIMIT ON SPEECHES.—Question, Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1289

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Staveley Hill (Staffordshire, Kingswinford); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1290

TRANSVAAL VOTERS' ROLL.—Question, Mr. Staveley Hill; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1290

CHINESE COOLIES IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Gibbs (Bristol, W.); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1291

NEW SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION.—Questions, Mr. Beckett (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby), and Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1291

RULES OF PROCEDURE.—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1291

SUNDAY TRADING.—Lords Message [27th March] relating to the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading considered

Ordered, That the Committee of this House do meet the Lords' Committee as proposed by their Lordships.—(*Mr. Joseph Pease.*)

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith 1291

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) [EXPENSES].—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of any expenses and allowances incurred under any Act of the present session to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901 (King's Recommendation signified), to-morrow.—(*Mr. Joseph Pease*). 1291

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL.—Reported from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 97.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 97].

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 131] 1291

Vaccination Bill.—" To amend the Law in respect to the procedure of officers and justices of the peace administering the several Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Arthur Black; supported by Mr. Channing, Mr. Levy, Sir Charles M'Laren, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. George White, and Sir William Collins; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132] 1291

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Pike Pease; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Abel H. Smith.

Report to lie upon the Table 129

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

The Solicitor-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 1293

Bill to amend the law relating to Justices of the Peace, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Justices of the Peace (No. 2) Bill.

" To amend the Law relating to Justices of the Peace," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 133].

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.

The Attorney-General (*Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.*) 1295

Motion made and Question proposed, " That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the regulation of Trade Unions and Trade Disputes.

Mr. Shackleton (*Lancashire, Clitheroe*) 1311
Mr. Atherley Jones (*Durham, N.W.*) 1316
Sir Edward Carson (*Dublin University*) 1320
Mr. Bruce (*Glamorganshire, S.*) 1328
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1331
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 1335
Mr. Guest (*Cardiff Districts*) 1342
Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield, Hallam*) 1344
Mr. John O'Connor (*Kildare, N.*) 1347
Mr. Norman (*Wolverhampton, S.*) 1349
Mr. W. Llewelyn Williams (*Carmarthen Districts*) 1351

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to provide for the regulation of Trades Unions and Trade Disputes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Solicitor-General.

Trade Disputes Bill.—" To provide for the regulation of Trades Unions and Trade Disputes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 134].

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Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [27th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Sir H. Aubrey-Fletcher (*Sussex, Lewes*) 1352

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill. [By Order.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Barnard (*Kidderminster*) 1353
Mr. Wardle (*Stockport*) 1355
Sir W. Evans-Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 1357

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir William Evans-Gordon.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Kearley, Devonport*) 1359

Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 1360
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1361
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 1361
Mr. Clough (*Yorkshire, W. R., Skipton*) 1361

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

The Port of London.

Mr. Dickinson (*St. Pancras, N.*) 1362
Mr. W. Benn (*Tower Hamlets, St. George's*) 1369

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the condition of the Port and docks of London urgently demands attention, with a view to the management thereof being forthwith placed in the hands of a public authority,"

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Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood) 1372
Mr. Barnard (Kidderminster) 1380
Mr. Russell Rea (Gloucester) 1384
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1386

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House is of opinion that the condition of the Port and docks of London urgently demands attention, with a view to the management thereof being forthwith placed in the hands of a public authority."

Coroners' Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E. R., Buckrose) 1389

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising.

Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.) 1389

Motion made and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Lord Robert Cecil*)—put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) 1389

And it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Army (Annual) Bill.—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Mr. Paul (Northampton) 1390
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 1392

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Paul.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1394
Mr. Forster (Kent, Sevenoaks) 1397
Sir James Woodhouse (Huddersfield) 1398
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1400
Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston) 1401
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 1402

Motion made and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 23 ; Noes, 191. (Division List, No. 34.)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at nineteen minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1906.

Earl of Bessborough.—Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Tuesday last, that the right of the Earl of Bessborough to vote at the elections of representative peers for Ireland das been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland 1405

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time Bill [H.L.]—The Chairman of Committees informed tdat House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn ; the Order made on the 8th instant discharged, and Bill committed 1405

Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1405

Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1405

Norwich Union Life Assurance Society Bill [H.L.]—Reported, with Amendments 1405

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments .. 1405

Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]—Reported, with Amendments 1405

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1405

Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1405

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Channel Ferry Railway and Quay Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1406

Rugby Subordinate School Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed 1406

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway (Purchase) Bill [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed 1406

Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]—Read 2 (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 1406

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1406

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.—Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools—

Of the Founder, Trustees, and Managers of a school at Charnock-Richard.

Of teachers in schools at Mawdsley; Walkden; Euxton; Mosley Common; Charnock-Richard; Standis Lower Ground; Walton-le-Lale ..

Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Mosley Common; Walton-le-Dale; Euxton; Mawdsley; Standish Lower Ground; Walmsley; Charnock-Richard; Heysham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1406

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (GENERAL).—Statement of present contributions to the Imperial Institute made by the Government of India and by the British Colonies and Protectorates 1406

TUBERCULOSIS.—Report of the delegates of His Majesty's Government to the International Congress on Tuberculosis, held at Paris from 2nd October to 7th October, 1905 1407

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).—Returns for the year 1904–5 1407

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT NETHER WALSTEAD, NEAR HAYWARD'S HEATH, SUSSEX).—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain M. B. Lloyd, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at Nether Walstead, near Hayward's Heath, Sussex, on 26th October, 1905 1407

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Report on American manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Vol. II.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1407

TRADE MARKS ACTS, 1905.—Statutory Rules and Orders made by the Board of Trade under the provisions of Section 60 of the Act 1407

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors on March 31st, 1904, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements during the year ended March 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1407

SUNDAY TRADING.—A Message ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to propose that the Joint Committee do meet in Committee Room A. on Tuesday next at Three o'clock 1407

NEW BILLS.

Settled Land Bill [H.L.] (No. 37).—A Bill to amend the Settled Land Acts, 1882 to 1890 1407

Married Women's Property Bill [H.L.]. (No. 38).—A Bill to amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1882, and—

Conveyancing Bill [H.L.]. (No. 39).—A Bill to amend the Conveyancing and Law of Property Act, 1881, were presented by the Lord Davey; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next 1408

Juvenile Smoking Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to provide for the prevention of juvenile smoking was presented by the Lord Reay; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 40.) 1408

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1408

Moved, That Standing Order XXXIX. be considered in order to its being suspended for this day's sitting.—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*) .. ..

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill.—Read 2ª (according to order); Committee negatived; then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been suspended) Bill read 3ª, and passed 1408

Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—Order of the day read for the House going into Committee.

Lord Hylton 1408

Moved, That the House resolve itself into Committee on this Bill.—(*Lord Hylton.*)

Lord Burghclere 1408

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Bill passed through Committee, and reported without Amendment to the House and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

THE CASE OF MR. JOSEPH NELSON.

Lord Muskerry 1410
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 1410

LORD MILNER.

Viscount Halifax 1410
Lord Ampthill 1423

Moved to Resolve, "That this House desires to place on record its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and Empire."—(*Viscount Halifax.*)

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 1430

Amendment moved—

"The Previous Question."—(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

Earl Cawdor 1434
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1439
Lord Burghclere 1443
Viscount Goschen 1447
Earl Roberts 1451
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 1453
The Earl of Halsbury 1459
Lord Grimthorpe 1465
The Marquess of Londonderry 1470
Lord Coleridge 1477
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1486
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1490
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1495

On Question, whether the said Question be now put, their Lordships divided :—Contents, 170 ; Not Contents, 35.

Original Motion put accordingly and agreed to.

Wireless Telegraphy Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª, and to be printed 1503

Army (Annual) Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª ; then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been suspended) Bill read 2ª (The Lord Privy (*M. Ripon*)) : Committee negatived : Bill read 3ª, and passed 1503

SUNDAY TRADING.—Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House on the subject of Sunday trading, do meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Committee Room A, on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock, as proposed by this House 1503

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz. :— L. Sinclair, L. Killanin ; agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

THE NATAL MINISTRY.—On the Motion for the adjournment.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 1503
The Earl of Elgin 1504

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 29TH MARCH, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Shrewsbury Corporation Water.

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1505

Dowlais Gas Bill.—As amended. considered; to be read the third time .. 1505

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1505

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Leeds, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1505

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).—Petitions against alteration of Law; From Ashworth; Bamack cum Southorpe; Bamburgh; Bampton (two); Bapchild (two); Barton St. David; Belmont; Berwick-on-Tweed; Binsted (two); Bishop's Fonthill (two); Bothal; Bournemouth; Broadwell and Kencot; Burneston; Catherington (two); Chadlington; Cherhill; Chewton Mendip; Chollerton; Church Broughton: Cirencester; Cleckheaton with Scholes (two); Clyst; Coldhurst; Collingbourne Ducis; Colton; Compton Paunceforte with Blackford; Crawley Down; Digswell (two); Dogmersfield; Dowdeswell; Droylesden; Droylesden St. Mary's (two); Easingwold; Eastham; Ellingham; Empshott; Frankby; Funderhall; Gainsborough; Great Yeldham; Hedley; Heywood; Holborn; Holdenhurst; Ilderton; Iron Acton; Laindon cum Basildon; Langford; Langho (two); Levenshulme (two); Lintle Horsted (two); Llandyfriog; Lytham (two); Manchester; Marchington Woodlands (two); Mavesyn Ridware (two); Middlesbrough; Nettlebed; New Windsor; North Sunderland; Norton; Oldham (two); Otterburn; Paddington (two); Penwortham; Pitney; Rearsby (two); Rochdale; Rockhampton; Rownhams; St. Clements, York; St. Columba, Southwick-on-Wear; Sandon; Shelfanger; Shottery; Somerton (two); South Cerney (two); Stannington; Stanton St. John; Stocksfield; Stratford-on-Avon; Sutterby; Sutton Montis; Sutton Veny; Tasburgh;

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Thelwall (two); Thornaby-on-Tees (two); Thorpe; Tingrith; Tittleshall; Tottenham; Tottington; Trimingham (two); Tunstead (two); Wacton (two); Walmsley; Wanborough; Wardle; West Gorton; Whissonsett; Whitadder; Whittonstall; Wickwar; and, Wimbish (two); to lie upon the Table 1515

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1904, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1905, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 99] .. 1506

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TUBERCULOSIS.—Copy presented, of Report of the Delegates of His Majesty's Government to the International Congress on Tuberculosis held at Paris in October, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1506

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Copy presented, of Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Vol. II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1506

TRADE MARKS ACT, 1905.—Copy presented, of Statutory Rules and Orders, dated 24th March, 1906, made by the Board of Trade under the Trade Marks Act, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1506

TRANSVAAL MINES.—Address for "Return of the output of Gold from the South African Mines in the Transvaal for the five years preceding the importation of Chinese Labour."—(*Mr. Verney*) 1507

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).—Address for "Return of the net Income and Expenditure of British India under certain specified heads for the eleven years from 1894–5 to 1904–5 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 178, of session 1905.)"—*Sir Henry Fowler*) 1507

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.—Address for "Copy of Workmen's Compensation Bill showing the effect on existing Acts."—(*Mr. Secretary Gladstone*) 1507

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CRITICISM OF ADMIRALTY POLICY BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.—Question, Captain Hervey (Bury St. Edmunds); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1507

SURCHARGE FOR EXTRA DIET ON NEW YEAR'S DAY IN BARNHALL POORHOUSE, ETC.—Question, Mr. Wood (Glasgow, St. Rollox); Answer, Mr. Sinclair .. 1508

SUMMARY PUNISHMENTS IN THE NAVY.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1508

BRITISH MUSEUM'S COLLECTION OF IRISH BELLS.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1508

POST OFFICE ADULT MESSENGERS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1509

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POSITION OF DONADA (KILDARE) POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1510

EPIZOOTIC LYMPHANGITIS.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 1510

SUPPOSED WAR GRATUITY OF LATE JOHN DUGGAN OF SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS —Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1511

WITHDRAWAL OF GARRISON AT ST. HELENA.—Question, Mr. Hicks-Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1512

PENSIONS OF CRIMEAN AND INDIAN MUTINY VETERANS.—Question, Mr. W. H. Davies (Bristol, S.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1512

BRIGADING EXPERIMENTS IN THE ARMY.—Question, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1512

REWARDS TO POLICE FOR ARRESTING A DESERTER.—Question, Mr. Wilkie (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1513

MEAT CONTRACTS FOR BARRY AND BUDDON CAMPS.—Question, Mr. Wilkie; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1513

COLONIAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1514

EXPORTS OF RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES.—Question, Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1514

IMPORTS OF HOPS.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1515

IRISH PROVIDENT ASSURANCE COMPANY.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1517

CASHEL EXTENSION RAILWAY GUARANTEE.—Question, Mr. Kendal O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1517

KEYHAM DOCKYARD—CASE OF JOHN GASKELL.—Question, Mr. J. Williams Benn (Devonport); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1518

PEMBROKE DOCKYARD DISCHARGES.—Question, Mr. O. C. Phillipps (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1518

HOLLOWAY POST OFFICE FACTORY.—Question, Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1519

OLDBURY LANGLEY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1519

ARREST FOR DEBT IN INDIA. — Question, Sir J. Jardine (Roxburghshire); Answer, Mr. Morley 1520

PERSIA—NEWCOMEN TRADE MISSION.—Question, Mr. T. Hart-Davies (Hackney, N.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1520

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ROLLING STOCK ON INDIAN GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central); Answer, Mr. Morley 1521

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND) CLERKS.— Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1521

KINGSTOWN PUBLIC WORKS.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. McKenna .. 1522

ARKLOW HARBOUR.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1523

TRINITY COLLEGE ESTATES.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1523

IRISH DISPENSARY DOCTORS.—Question, Mr. Samuel Young (Cavan, E.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1523

TULLYVIN (CAVAN) DISPENSARY DISTRICT.—Question, Mr. Samuel Young; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1524

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS IN CORK—JOHN KEEFE'S CASE.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1524

DUBLIN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ART.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1525

ROYAL ARMY CLOTHING DEPARTMENT.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Buchanan 1526

SOLDIERS' PENSIONS—THOMAS SHORTAL'S CASE.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1526

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NATAL.—Question, Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor); Answer, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman 1526

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

WAGES OF SHEFFIELD ARMOUR PLATE MAKERS.—Question, Mr. Macpherson (Preston); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1527

H.M.S. "BRITANNIA"—BEAGLING.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1527

ROSYTH.—Question, Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrew's Burghs); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton) 1528

KEYHAM EXTENSION WORKS.—Question, Mr. Hay Morgan (Cornwall, Truro); Answer, Mr. Lambert 1528

ST. HELENA GARRISON.—Question, Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddingtonshire) 1528

CRIMEAN AND INDIAN MUTINY PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. W. H. Davies (Bristol, S.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1528

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Rewards for Arresting Deserters.—Question, Mr. Wilkie (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1529

Barry and Buddon Camps Meat Contracts.—Question, Mr. Wilkie; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1529

Army Recruitment.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1529

Lancashire Royal Field Artillery.—Questions, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) and Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1530

Canadian Coasting Trade and the United States.—Question, Lord Helmsley (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Oldham) 1531

St. Helena Garrison.—Questions, Mr. Hicks Beach; Answers, Mr. Churchill .. 1531

British Indian Nomenclature.—Question, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1532

Johannesburg Mines.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1532

Flogging in the Native Indian Army.—Question, Mr. T. Hart-Davies (Hackney, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. John Morley, Montrose Burghs) 1532

Sale of Drugs to Children in India.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. John Morley 1533

Seistan Water Channels Award.—Question, Mr. T. Hart-Davies; Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1533

Flogging of Natives at Hankow.—Question, Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1534

Development of Persia.—Question, Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1534

Returns of Steel Imports.—Question, Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1535

Alien Pilots.—Question, Lord Helmsley; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1535

New Spanish Tariff.—Question, Lord Helmsley; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George .. 1535

Underground Cable to Scotland.—Question, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire, N.W.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1536

South African Committee of Inquiry—Cost.—Questions, Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping); Answers, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1536

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CONVENTIONAL AND MONASTIC PROPERTY.—Questions, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.), and Mr. Arnold-Forster (Croydon); Answers, Mr. McKenna 1537

STEMMED TOBACCO.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. McKenna 1537

DUTY ON FOREIGN SPIRITS.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. McKenna 1538

OXFORD MUNICIPAL CHARITIES.—Question, Lord Valentia (Oxford); Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1539

LOCHS SCHOOL BOARD, ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1539

ISLAND OF LEWIS POLICE, SUPERINTENDENT.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1540

ROYAL BURGHS AND ROYAL ACCESSIONS.—Question, Sir J. Jardine (Roxburghshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1540

GRANGEMOUTH SHOOTING FATALITY.—Question, Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire), and Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answers, Mr. Sinclair .. 1540

DINGWALL AND CROMARTY LIGHT RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 1542

ROXBOROUGH ROAD SCHOOLS, LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange) 1542

ESTATES COMMISSIONERS' STAFF.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) 1543

ADMINISTRATION OF THE IRISH LAND ACTS—QUALIFICATION OF OFFICIALS.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1543

MR. MONTGOMERY'S KILLNEAN ESTATE.—Question, Mr. Ginnell; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1543

EXPENDITURE ON LABOURERS' COTTAGE SCHEME.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork, County, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1544

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS AS FARMERS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1544

EDENDERRY—ALLEGED DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. T. L. Corbett; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1545

IRISH CONSULTATIVE AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1545

PERMANENT INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1545

KAVANAGH ESTATE EVICTED TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Meagher (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1547

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CASTLECOMER COAL MINING INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Meagher; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1547

SOUTH TIPPERARY UNTENANTED LAND.—Question, Mr. Cullinan (Tipperary, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1547

SOUTH TIPPERARY EVICTED TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Cullinan; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1547

CAPTAIN CALDBECK'S QUEEN'S COUNTY ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1548

ADAIR ESTATE EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, Mr. Bryce 1550

GALWAY CITY AND THE COST OF PAUPER LUNATICS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1550

IRISH LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. Finch (Rutland); Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1551

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Liddell (Down, W.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1551

IRISH SCHOOL BUILDING GRANT.—Question, Mr. Liddell; Answer, Mr. Bryce .. 1551

IRISH LAND STOCK.—Question, Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.); Answer, Mr. Bryce 1552

DECEASED SOLDIERS' ESTATES—CASE OF JOHN DUGGAN.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Haldane 1552

PUBLICATION OF MINISTERS' SPEECHES.—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1553

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE AND CHINESE LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1553

CROFTER ACTS.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1553

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE.—Questions, Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) Mr. Arnold-Forster (Croydon) and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 1553

RULES OF PROCEDURE.—Questions, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) and Mr. Samuel Roberts; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1555

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMITTEE—FORMS OF REFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1555

MAINTENANCE OF IRISH PAUPER LUNATICS.—Question, Mr. Charles McVeigh (Donegal, E.); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1556

SOUTH AFRICAN NEW CONSTITUTION—THE COMMITTEE AND THE RESIDENTS.—Question, Mr. Hunt (Shropshire, Ludlow); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1556

TRANSVAAL REDISTRIBUTION SCHEME.—Question, Major Anstruther-Gray; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1556

COLONIAL MARRIAGE LAW.—Question, Mr. Walker (Leicestershire, Melton); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1557

AFFORESTATION.—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.) and Mr. Keir Hardie; Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1557

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL—THE WORKMENS' COMPENSATION BILL.—Questions, Mr. Paul (Northampton), Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's), Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Shackleton and Sir Robert Ropner (Stockton); Answers, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Haldane 1558

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Police (Superannuation) Bill:—Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Watson Rutherford, Mr. Dunne, Major Dunne, Mr. Dudley Ward, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Money, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Hay, Mr. Luke White, Mr. William Priestley, Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Ridsdale, and Dr. Shipman.

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill:—Mr. Solicitor-General, Sir Christopher Furness, Mr. Guest, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Cairns, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Archibald Williamson, Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Mr. Lewis Haslam, Mr. Walter Rea, and Mr. Harry Marks.

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Dogs Bill:—Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Cochrane, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Winfrey, Mr. James Murray, Mr. Levy Lever, Mr. Menzies, Sir Robert Hobart, Lord Wodehouse, Mr. Weir, Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Brace, and Colonel Gardner.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1561

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEE).

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. John Johnson, Sir William Holland, and Mr. Wolff; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lambert, Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Edward Strauss, Mr. Robert Price, and Mr. Walter Long.

Report to lie upon the Table 1562

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NEW BILLS.

Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment Bill.—"To amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Mr. Trevelyan; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 135] 1562

Building Lands (Scotland) Bill.—"To deal with Building Lands in Scotland," presented by Mr. Munro Ferguson; supported by Mr. Archibald Williamson, and Mr. Lamont; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 136] 1563

Small Tenants (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of land in Scotland by Small Tenants," presented by Mr. Munro Ferguson; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Eugene Wason; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137] 1563

Clerks of the Peace and County Council Bill.—"To amend the Law with regard to the Clerks of Peace and Clerks of the County Council," presented by Mr. Luttrell; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Channing, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, and Sir Walter Foster; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 138] 1563

Public Health Bill.—"To amend the Public Health Acts," presented by Sir James Woodhouse; supported by Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. John William Wilson, Mr. Samuel Roberts, and Mr. Arthur Henderson; to be read a second time upon Thursday 26th April, and to be printed. [Bill 139] 1563

Deputy Clerks of the Peace Bill:—"To make better provision for the appointment of Deputy Clerks of the Peace in municipal boroughs," presented by Sir James Woodhouse; supported by Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Harmood-Banner, and Sir Benjamin Stone; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April, and to be printed. [Bill 140] 1563

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

1. £490,000, Medical Establishment, Pay, etc.

Mr. Burdett-Coutts (*Westminster*) 1563
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 1569
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 1571
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1572
Mr. Harold Cox (*Preston*) 1573
Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 1573

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £819,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, etc., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 141,058, including 8,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Colonel Herbert (*Monmouthshire, N.*) 1574

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £818,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Colonel Herbert.*)

Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 1576
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1577
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1579
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 1580
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 1583
Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1585
Sir Robert Hobart (*Hampshire, New Forest*) 1585
Lord Morpeth (*Birmingham, S.*) 1587
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1588
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N.*) 1590
Mr. Haldane 1593
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1597
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 1598
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (*Wiltshire, Chippenham*) 1598

By leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Hicks-Beach (*Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury*) 1599
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 1600
Major Anstruther-Gray (*St. Andrews Burghs*) 1601
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 1602
Mr. Cochrane 1602

Question put, and agreed to.

£423,000, Imperial Yeomanry; Pay and Allowances.

Mr. Stanley Wilson (*Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*) 1602
Mr. Gibbs (*Bristol, W.*) 1604
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (*Lincolnshire, Horncastle*) 1604
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 1607

Vote agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,244,000 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 1608
Sir H. Aubrey-Fletcher (*Sussex, Lewes*) 610

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill (By Order.)—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Burdett-Coutts (*Strand, Westminster*) 1612
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 1616
Mr. Baker (*Finsbury, E.*) 1617
Mr. Neild (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 1617
The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. John Burns, Battersea*) 1618
Mr. C. Duncan (*Barrow-in-Furness*) 1620

Question put and agreed to.

Middlesex County Council Tramways Bill (By Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Supply [4th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1906-7

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £212,756, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues"

Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 1621
Mr. Rogers (*Wiltshire, Devizes*) 1622

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Rogers.*)

Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 1624
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 1625
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 1627

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Mr. Winfrey (*Norfolk, S.W.*) 1628
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.*) 1629
Mr. Harmood-Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 1634
Mr. Vivian (*Birkenhead*) 1636
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 1637
Colonel Kenyon Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 1640
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 1641
Mr. Keir Hardie (*Merthyr Tydvil*) 1642
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, W. Derby*) 1643
Mr. McKenna 1644

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

And, it being Midnight, the Motion to report Progress lapsed without Question put.

And the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to, Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill, Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment 1645

Wallis's Divorce Bill.—That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Wallis's Divorce Bill, as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned .. 1645

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th March; *Mr. Secretary Gladstone*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 98.] 1645

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."

Mr. Akers-Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 1646
Mr. Ramsay Macdonald (*Leicester*) 1646
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.*) 1647
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 1649
Mr. Arnold-Forster (*Croydon*) 1649

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned at Twenty-six minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIRST SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY IN THE SIXTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1906.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 19*th March*, 1906.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Mervyn Richard Viscount Powerscourt to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House. That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Scottish Union and National Insurance Company [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Clause 27 be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Heacham Water Bill, Romford and District Tramways Bill, ought to be dispensed with.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London United

Tramways Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that the powers to construct the tramways proposed to be authorised be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the West Yorkshire Tramway Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Tramway No. 10 be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that Tramway No. 3B be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill ought to be dispensed with, provided that Tramways Nos. 4, 5, 6, 6A, 7, 7A, 7B, 7C, 8, 8A, 9, 17, 17A, 17B, 17C, and 20 be struck out of the Bill.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill ought to be dispensed with. Read, and agreed to.

HOLYHEAD WATER BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 8th instant and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

ACCRINGTON DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BOARD BILL [H.L.].

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The Orders made on the 5th instant and Tuesday last discharged, and Bill committed.

WEST CUMBERLAND ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NEWPORT HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to Order) and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

WALLIS' DIVORCE BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed and sent to the Commons.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious education in schools; of persons signing (2); read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACT, 1891.

Regulation made by the Lord-Lieutenant under the Penal Servitude Act, 1891, Sections 8 and 9, for the taking of finger prints and measuring and photographing prisoners. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Message from the Commons that they concur in the Resolution of this House communicated to them on the 9th instant on the subject of Sunday Trading as desired by this House.

PROCEDURE.

Message from the Commons for leave for the Viscount Selby to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee of that House.

ROYAL COLEGE OF SCIENCE.

Final Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science, Vol. I. Final Report, with Appendix I.

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry, for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

METROPOLITAN CATTLE MARKET.

An account of moneys received and paid by the Chamberlain of the City of London for the year 1905, also an account of extraordinary works executed other than general repairs for the same period.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to William Watson under the Acts, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Regulations, dated 26th February, 1906, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of the processes of spinning and weaving flax and tow, and the processes incidental thereto.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Regulation, dated 17th March, 1906, made by the Secretary for Scotland, under the Penal Servitude Act, 1891, Section 8, for the measuring and photographing of prisoners.

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT, 1896 (MOTOR CAR ACT, 1903).

Order by the Secretary for Scotland, dated 5th March, 1906, prohibiting motor car traffic on a highway in the county of Peebles.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.

Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1906. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, with respect to the carriage of deck-loads in the winter time. Was presented by the Lord Muskerry; Read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 31.]

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.]; PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

THE MILITIA.

*VISCOUNT HARDINGE rose to call attention to the present organisation and condition of service in the Militia and the increasing deficiency in the numbers of the force in officers and men; and to ask His Majesty's Government what they propose to do to deal with this evil; and to move for papers.

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, in bringing forward this Motion it is a matter of great satisfaction to know that a question of this kind is never approached in your Lordships' House as one of a purely Party nature. On the contrary, I am fully aware that this subject always receives that consideration which it undoubtedly deserves, noble Lords on both sides of the House being actuated by the same motive—the good of the country, and, therefore, of His Majesty's Imperial Forces. It was, therefore, not surprising, but at the same time none the less gratifying, to find the Secretary of State of War, in his very able speech the other day in the House of Commons when moving the Army Estimates, emphasizing in no small degree the necessity and importance of maintaining a continuity of policy, irrespective of the Party by whom that policy was enunciated. It was also a pleasure, after the many hard things that have been said about the Party now in Opposition, to hear that their administration of the War Office, which had been so freely and adversely criticised in the past, was such that the Secretary of State for War was able to declare in Parliament that—

> "The Army has never been in such an efficient state as it is now."

But although this gratifying announcement has been made with regard to the Army as a whole, we find that a different note is struck when reference is made to a most important branch of the Army. I refer, of course, to that old constitutional force, the Militia, a branch of the Service of which many Lords on both sides have had actual experience, and in which I am sure all of us take a great and abiding interest.

In the speech of the Secretary of State the other day we were told that all was well with the Army, but in the same speech we were informed, with regard to the Militia, that its present condition could not be considered satisfactory, and the reason for this was given in this way, that as yet no definite function had ever been assigned to that force. Without desiring to cavil in any sort of way at the eminently statesman-like and patriotic speech of the Secretary of State for War, I must, as one taking a keen personal interest in the Militia, and having the honour at the present time to command one of His Majesty's Militia battalions, express my great disappointment at learning the cause of the position of the Militia force, and observing that no proposal is made to remedy it. It is for the purpose of obtaining information on this subject that I have brought this Motion before your Lordships to-night, and I trust that my noble friend who represents the War Office in this House will inform us in detail as to what the Government propose to do in order to raise the efficiency of the Militia, and I hope he will tell us at the same time what its future organisation is to be.

I am, I must admit, rather apprehensive as to the future of the Militia. There are at the present moment in this country two schools of thought, in neither of which the Militia occupies a place. On the one hand, there is that school of thought to which many distinguished members of both Houses belong—the blue-water school; on the other hand, there is that school to which as yet no title has been ascribed, but which advocate general disarmament all round. I cannot help feeling that the Militia would die a violent death at the hands of the one, whilst it would suffer a lingering fate at the hands of the other. The first would undoubtedly abolish it as useless, whilst the second would neglect it as unnecessary. Personally, my Lords, I do not belong to either of these schools, nor am I in sympathy with any of their opinions. I claim to belong rather to that school which has for its maxim *Si vis pacem, pare bellum.* I was glad to note the statement by the Secretary of State that he would like to see the functions of the Militia more clearly defined, and I shall rejoice if the noble Earl the Under-Secretary is able to define clearly those functions to your Lordships to-day.

The present uncertainty as to the future position of the Militia cannot but have a degenerating influence on that force, both as regards morale and efficiency. So long as this force is used as a stepping-stone for the young officer of the Line; so long as the Militia is used in the manner suggested the other day by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who would like to see the Militia used as a temporary employment for casual labourers out of work—so long as these suggestions are brought forward will the Militia fail to render efficient service to the Crown. This is a state of things which I desire to see altered, for it is undoubtedly the cause of great anxiety on the part of those who have carefully considered the position, a position which up to now has prevented the Militia taking that place in the Services to which by its historical associations it is most undoubtedly entitled. As a Militia commanding-officer I must protest, too, against this branch of the Service being, as the Secretary of State for War very aptly put it in the House of Commons the other day, bled white in order that the Army should be supplied with its fighting strength in time of war. This may or it may not be a useful position to hold; it certainly is not a dignified one, and I suppose in the future it will not be considered a necessary one.

I am perfectly aware that the noble Earl the Under-Secretary has not been many months at the War Office, but he may have been there long enough to discover why the War Office has always looked upon the Militia as the Cinderalla of the Service. Is it not the fact that the Militia has been treated in the past as a half-way house between the Volunteers and the Line? Whilst it has only received half the encouragement accorded to the former, it has always met with double the criticism allotted to the latter. This is not as it should be when it is considered that anything has been thought good enough for the Militia, as regards armament, clothing and equipment, but not as regards the

Volunteers. Is it surprising, therefore, that those taking an interest in the Militia should raise criticisms as to the methods of favouritism which have been adopted, I may say, from time immemorial?

I do not propose to trouble your Lordships to-night with figures, for I am asking to be supplied with them by the noble Earl. What I want to know is, what has been the annual decrease of officers and men in the Militia since the South African War. I believe the deficit at the present time is no less than 1,045 officers and 36,000 men. My point is this—if there is a deficiency, as there undoubtedly is, of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, how do the Government propose to meet this deficiency? If officers are to be regularly deflected from the Militia to the Line, how can it be expected that they should occupy themselves actively for the benefit of those battalions in which they can have no permanent interest? Therefore, it is surely essential that the officers should know their men, and at the same time that the men should know their officers. Without mutual knowledge there can be no mutual sympathy, no *esprit de corps*, and without *esprit de corps* the Militia, or any other force, is virtually dead. The Secretary of State for War in his speech on the Army Estimates the other day informed us that there had arisen in the Army a new school of officers, which he described as the thinking school. I desire to enroll myself in that school as a pupil, and I trust that in future the War Office will give fairplay all round. Then I trust that the claims of the Militia, great as they undoubtedly are, will not in the future be neglected as they have been in the past.

We have recently emerged from a great war, in which the Volunteers nobly took their part, and I think the same can be equally said of the Militia. The lessons that were learnt during that war include, we are told, a knowledge of the fighting capabilities of the Volunteers. That is equally true of the Militia. Do not, therefore, let us forget that lesson now that the ship of State is sailing in peaceful waters, but rather let us encourage to the utmost in time of peace those on whom we must rely in time of war. I venture to think that the most difficult problem that the Government have to meet at the present time is the officer question. It cannot be denied that there is now a most lamentable dearth of officers in every branch of His Majesty's Service. More especially does this apply to the Cavalry. Every one must admit that it is essential that these officers should attain the highest standard of efficiency; but what do we find? We find gentlemen admitted into these regiments who have not pased the ordinary elementary educational tests, but who are admitted on probationary terms. This dearth of officers is also to be found in the Militia, and it is due, as I have said, to the suspense and great uncertainty that hangs over their heads. I believe it is chiefly for this reason that the noble and gallant Earl the late Commander-in-Chief has urged the necessity of introducing into this country some form of universal training for all young men on attaining manhood who are of good physique. He has urged that they should be called upon without distinction of class for service in the United Kingdom. This, to my mind, is the true solution of the officer question, and also, for the matter of that, of the rank and file difficulty.

After the lesson of patriotism taught us by our ally Japan, and bearing in mind the fact of that alliance, it behoves us to take immediate steps to fulfil the compact in a far more patriotic spirit than has been the case hitherto, by making up our minds to see that all branches of our Military Service are raised to the highest state of efficiency. And it is on these lines that the noble and gallant Earl has pleaded with no uncertain voice throughout the country. All must admit that the noble and gallant Earl's opinion is entitled to respect and consideration. I trust, therefore, that the people of this country will take what he has said to heart, and that something will be done to make our fighting forces effective for home defence, and at the same time ready to take the field in any part of our Empire, wherever they may be called upon to do so. Admiral Togo, who has been very rightly called the Nelson of the East, has said, and said truly, that battles are won only by preparation in time of peace—preparation, not only of men and materials, but of character. You cannot have character without enthusiasm. That is what I want to see in the Militia, and when it has acquired it, it will be able to take its position as the great custodian of the security of this country.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: My Lords, I join with the noble Viscount in deploring the lack of officers and men in the Militia. The main reason, and the only one with which I propose to deal, for the decline of the Militia is the policy which has been advisedly and consistently pursued towards that force by the War Office. On assuming complete control of the Militia some twenty-five years ago, the War Office determined that the Militia was not to remain as a substantive force, but to become a feeding force for the Line. The foundations upon which alone a national Militia can rest—namely, local influence and civilian interest—were excluded, and replaced by departmental control. This system, advisedly adopted by the War Office, has completely throttled, as it was meant to do, all the national element in the Militia.

The Militia as a national institution has ceased to exist. What we are pleased to call the Militia is now only a recruiting agency for the Line. Even in that capacity there is abundant evidence given before the Norfolk Commission to show that the methods practised for recruiting the Line from the Militia are unsound and unfair, and consequently injurious to the popularity of both Line and Militia in the country.

The policy pursued by the War Office of converting the Militia into a Line-recruiting agency was based on the assumption that the Regular Army was capable, without the assistance of any supplementary force, of bringing to a successful termination any war upon which we were likely to be engaged. We realise now that no matter how excellent our Regular Army may be, it must be numerically so insignificant that it cannot of itself hope to bring to a successful issue a war against a civilised Power. You cannot contend with any hope of ultimate success against a nation in arms by means of a few hundred thousand Regular soldiers. It was to meet this new development in the military systems of the world that His Majesty's late Government created the Home Service Army. But His Majesty's present Government, by a recent Army Order, put an end to the Home Service Army, about which so many debates took place last year. I venture humbly, but sincerely, to congratulate the Government upon their prompt action.

The Home Service Army was the direct negation of the recommendation of the Commission on the South African War, which advised the extension of the forces of the nation outside the limits of the Regular Army. But how are His Majesty's Government going to replace the Home Service Army which has been just ended? The need for a supplementary force to the Regular Army remains the most pressing problem of the day; until it is solved the defence of the Empire is but ill provided for. I trust the Government may find the solution of the problem in the direction of a force raised on a Militia basis, but recruited by national, not by departmental, methods, organised and enlisted for the purpose for which it is required—namely, the defence of the Empire all the world over. I ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War whether His Majesty's Government mean to continue the War Office policy of the last twenty-five years, whereby the Militia as a national force has been destroyed and converted into a Line-recruiting agency, or whether they propose to restore the Militia as a substantive, self-contained force, recruited by national and not by departmental methods.

There is a short paragraph dealing with the Militia in the Memorandum of the Secretary of State for War relating to Army Estimates. The proposals contained therein do not touch the main question—that is, the use for which the Militia will in future be required; but they are of considerable interest, and I am very glad to see them. Some experiments are to be made in the direction of increased training for recruits. The recruits of twenty selected battalions are to be drilled under their own officers for six months on enlistment. I have always been in favour of training Militia recruits for six months duing the slack season of the local industry, but I am not in favour of drill on enlistment. Drill on enlistment means in this case—at least as far as I can understand it—that the moment a man enlists he goes into barracks and stays there for six months drill.

Now, suppose recruit No. 1 comes into barracks on the 1st of November, and recruit No. 50 on the 1st of January following, and all the intervening numbers dribble into barracks by ones and twos at various intervals between the 1st of November and the 1st of January; then recruit No. 1 will have been in barracks two months longer than recruit No. 50, and hardly any half-dozen recruits will have been in barracks the same number of days. You will perceive that it is impossible to get these fifty men into one class for instruction. Common-sense shows military training cannot be done by squads of five or six with good results. It is bad for both instructors and instructed.

I should prefer the plan known in the Militia as the preliminary drill party. That would work as follows: say a battalion is to train in May, then all the recruits of that battalion would be assembled in November for a six months recruit training, preliminary to the one month of battalion training. Enlist recruits all the year round, but say to the man enlisted in March—"You do not come up for drill till November, when the preliminary drill assembles." In this way you get all the recruits assembled at the same moment for a course of instruction, followed by one month of battalion training. An Infantry soldier can be taught a great deal in seven months, provided always that the system of instruction is the best, but it never can be the best with drill on enlistment. I know well that drill on enlistment will be a great convenience for the unemployed. But I am looking at this question from the point of view of a Militia commanding officer, anxious to give the soundest military training to men at that moment of their life and at that season of the year when they can be best spared from their civilian work. Drill on enlistment all the year round will increase the number, but will detract from the quality of the Militia. I fear, in short, an inrush of bad characters. I would therefore ask the noble Earl if power could be granted to Militia commanding officers to dismiss from the Service, on their own authority, men of bad character, without the delay inseparable from reference to superior authority.

I ask the noble Earl if the standard of instruction for the six months training of Militia recruits is to be the same as that of the Line, or is it to be a lower standard than that of the Volunteers. I ask for this reason. Signalling has just been abolished in the Militia. A short time ago all Militia adjutants were required to be in possession of a signalling certificate. But that is no longer the case. For the last three years I have been allowed to call up a party of men to be instructed in signalling duties during the recruits' preliminary drill. I have been informed this year that leave cannot be given for calling up this party for instruction, because signalling is prohibited in the Militia.

Signalling is authorised for the Volunteers and Yeomary. It is essential for service in the field; but since it is not to be allowed in the Militia, the inference must be that it is not the intention to employ the Militia in the field in the same way as the Volunteers and Yeomanry. The abolition of signalling for the Militia is quite consistent with the policy of using the Militia as a Line-recruiting agency. It is consistent with the absorption of the Militia into a Home Service Army, but it is not consistent with greatly increased training for the Militia. and for using the Militia as units in the field. I would ask the Under-Secretary of State for War if, pending the advent of a little clearness of thought upon these matters, Militia battalions should be allowed to practise signalling, and to call up men for signalling instruction if their application to do so be recommended by the General commanding the division.

As regards remedies for the deplorable and ever-increasing deficiency of officers in the Militia, I have already suggested to your Lordships that lords-lieutenant and deputy-lieutenants should be made responsible for providing officers for the Militia. There are at present 123 lords-lieutenant and about 3,700 deputy-lieutenants in Great Britain and Ireland, all appointed under the Militia laws, all persons of light, leading, and influence in their localities, and charged by Statute with duties towards the Militia which, by the policy of the War Office, they are prevented from performing. As regards the deficiency of men, I have on a previous occasion suggested that that deficiency should be met by means of national instead of departmental recruiting. On those two points I have nothing to add to that which I have already said in your Lordships' House. There is, therefore, no need for me to dwell further upon these two subjects.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, my noble friend Lord Hardinge has brought forward this Motion with so much fairness and such complete absence of Party feeling that it is my intention to discuss this matter in the same spirit. My noble friend moves for Papers. On seeing his Motion on the Paper I wrote asking what the Papers were that he required, and he replied—

> "The Papers referred to in my Question are as to the present deficiency of officers, non-commissioned officers, and men in the Militia; also as to whether this decrease has been gradual during the last five years."

I can assure my noble friend that I shall be very glad to have those figures got out and submitted to him. I would beg him, however, to bear in mind that any figures that we can produce giving effect to his wish must be modified, and that they cover the very disturbing influence of the war itself.

I now propose to deal with the general question of the Militia, which has been raised by the noble Viscount. I am glad that noble Lords have raised in this House a debate upon the Militia, if it is only to have the opportunity of re-assuring your Lordships that it is the desire of His Majesty's Government to utilise to the fullest extent that we can the opportunities and energies of the Militia. The Secretary of State in his recent speech alluded to the necessity for a power of expansion outside the limit of the Regular forces of the Crown, and in so doing he was re-affirming a principle which finds a vital place in the recommendations both of the Elgin and Norfolk Commissions.

It is my intention, appreciating to the full the friendly spirit in which this matter has been approached, to take the House into our confidence. We admit, and in the admission deplore the fact, that the Militia is at present in a very unsatisfactory state. One reason for this is, to my mind, the decline of county military feeling in the United Kingdom. Another is the popularity of the Yeomanry. They receive high pay and allowances—5s. 6d. a day as compared with 1s. paid to the militiamen; and a yeoman also gets £5 for his horse for the fortnight, and as the horse is often his own, this means a free gift in many cases. There is no doubt that the Yeomanry absorb more officers and men into their ranks than formerly, and also attract more popular attention and sympathy. The Volunteers, too, possess considerable political influence. They have of late years attracted many men of the Militia class into their ranks, owing to their being able to pay them whilst in camp, and consequently they also have been greater competitors with the Militia force than was formerly the case.

A militiaman is paid and clothed and fed exactly on similar lines to a Regular. The Volunteers are not paid a daily rate of pay, but the corps are paid a capitation grant per efficient to meet expenses, such as drill-halls and clothing, and camp allowance, to meet the expenses of camp, rations, etc. On the whole there is not much fault to find with the principle of the present organisation of the Militia. It is essentially a county organisation, and, where county feeling exists, it is the one best calculated to attract civilians who can give up a month annually to soldiering. The varying establishments of regiments—they vary from 600 to over 1,200 men in a regiment—are, however, detrimental to efficiency from a mobilisation point of view. In the Regular Army the regiment is of the same establisment, and mobilisation is planned accordingly—transport and everything required for fitting it for the field. It is hoped that this may be remedied when we know what effect the new system of training will have on the force, thereby enabling us at the War Office to rearrange the establishments of battalions.

Some Militia officers object, and perhaps with reason, to an organisation which places them under the control of the Regulars; for example, the Militia recruits and the permanent staff are during the non-training season under the officer commanding the Line depot, and not under the officer commanding the Militia unit. This is a matter the importance of which the War Office is fully alive to and is seriously considering. The future organisation of the Militia is not yet determined on. It plays such an important part in sharing the duties and responsibilities of the Regular Army that it can only be considered in conjunction with it, and we cannot announce our intentions with respect to the Militia until we are in a position to formulate our policy on the Army generally. The new condition of service, which we propose to try experimentally with twenty infantry battalions, is that recruits will on enlistment, in any period of the year, drill for six months instead of, as at present, for sixty-three days, and the regiment will train annually for forty-one days instead of for twenty-seven. The noble Duke spoke of the difficulties that might arise from the men being engaged at different times. I quite admit the force of that; but we cannot control the conditions of labour. I should like to say that this has nothing to do with the idea of winter training. It is simply an extension of the present periods of training by which it is hoped that recruits will get a more thorough grounding in a soldier's duties, and the trained militiamen will have more time for the many subjects of instruction which now have to be compressed into twenty-seven days—indeed, into much less than that, when Sundays and bad weather are taken into account.

In musketry we anticipate a great improvement by the increased time given to drill and to training. Under existing arrangements the musketry instruction is of necessity much neglected and hurried through. The annual training of units will continue to take place generally during the summer season, as at present. The question of winter training is receiving careful consideration. It will be tested with a limited number of regiments, should they be anxious to undergo it, and should accommodation be available. The difficulties in the way of winter training are that the instruction in outdoor work, especially musketry, cannot, owing to cold weather and bad light, be so beneficial as in the summer; that accommodation is difficult to find; empty barracks are rare; canvas cannot be used. To billeting there are grave social as well as military objections; it is not popular with the officers or with a considerable proportion of the men. With regard to the supply of officers, inquiries are being made of various Universities and educational establishments to ascertain whether a large number cannot be obtained from those sources. The War Office also hope to get increased interest and assistance from lords-lieutenant and deputy-lieutenants of counties.

LORD NEWTON: In what way?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: We hope, as I say, to get increased interest and assistance from lords-lieutenant and deputy-lieutenants of counties, whose very appointments, as was mentioned by the noble Duke, were made under the Militia Act, 1882 (Sections 29, 30), and who, under Section 6 of the Act, are primarily responsible for the supply of officers for the Militia. The existence of this inherent obligation has in the large majority of cases been entirely ignored of late years, and we are certainly not supported as we should be by these officers. At present the deputy-lieutenants, both in their numbers—they run to thousands—and in their military efficiency, bear too close an analogy to the military patriots in America, who were by no means the least expensive legacy of the Civil War.

The deficiency in the numbers of officers and men in the Militia is much to be regretted. It is not being lost sight of by the War Office. We earnestly hope that if we can place the Militia on a sound basis, and clearly define its military functions, a matter which necessarily involves time and great care, it will recover its old prestige and its position among the military forces of the Crown. With regard to signalling in the Militia, it was found that, owing to the concentration of training into one month in the year, it was impossible to keep up the requisite standard, which was only to be acquired by continual practice, and, consequently, the issue of signalling equipment is not now allowed, nor are Regular officers required to hold signalling certificates on appointments as adjutants, although a certificate of proficiency in semaphore work is essential.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: Why is it allowed to the Volunteers and the Yeomanry and not to the Militia?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I am not able to answer that Question offhand; but it must be remembered that the Volunteers have an advantage which the Militia have not, in that they are able to practise signalling more or less regularly. This question of signalling is undoubtedly an important one. It is one which shall not be lost sight of by the War Office; but we feel that our decision must be guided by the experience of the increased training. We are anxious that the Militia, in order to be a real support to the Regular Army, should have every opportunity of training as self-contained units with its own officers. As the Secretary of State has said in another place—

> "By all means let the Militia be the support of the Regular Army, but let them train in their own units and under their own officers."

It is not intended to stop the transfer of trained militiamen to the Regular Army, but it is proposed, in the case of the twenty experimental battalions, to restrict that transfer to those militiamen who have completed at least one annual training—that is of six weeks—in addition to their recruits' drill of six months. These commanding officers of Militia will thus be enabled to see, for at any rate one training, all men who have enlisted in their unit, instead of, as at present, having the trouble and anxiety of a large proportion of their recruits merely enlisting in the Militia as a stepping-stone to the Line. In conclusion, I desire to say that, without being in a position at present to give more detailed information, we are desirous to give to the Militia the character of a national force, and we are anxious that the Militia should, both by their organisation and training, be at all times prepared to take the field as units.

*LORD RAGLAN: My Lords, although the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War expressed himself kindly towards the Militia, he was not in a position to make any statement as to what is to be our future position. The position of the Militia for several years has been an extremely unfortunate one. We were first of all told that we were to be very much improved. The late Secretary of State for War when he came into office admitted, in a speech either at Manchester or at Liverpool, that the force had been very much neglected, and he stated that he intended to do great things for it. We heard nothing more until the following year, when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do a great thing for the Militia by abolishing it. That plan was not adopted; but since then no further word has come, either from the late Secretary of State for War, or from the present Secretary of State, as to what is to be our future.

The effect of the present uncertainty, as every one of your Lordships is well aware, has been most unfortunate to the Militia, and it has been excessively unfortunate in the case of officers. The question of an armed force of any sort is primarily one of officers. The rank and file can be improvised in a short space of time; non-commissioned officers even, within limits, can be provided; but it is absolutely impossible to provide a body of competent officers without long and careful training. The noble Viscount quoted figures to show that the Militia is 1,045 under strength in regard to officers. That practically means that there are something like 30 per cent of vacancies among the officers' ranks. That is a most dangerous state of things for the country; and what makes that particular matter more than usually serious is this, that, as the noble Duke has said, there are great differences in the establishments of regiments. Some are very strong, while others are very weak. I think the noble Earl was too sanguine in putting 600 as his lowest estimate. I am acquainted with a regiment which does not possess, I think, 200; and it is a curious fact that those regiments which have most officers usually have the fewest men, and *vice versa.* The strongest regiments are in the manufacturing districts of the north. If the noble Earl will turn his attention to the Lancashire regiments, he will find that there are fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen vacancies for officers in those battalions, and a battalion with only one-third of its establishment of officers cannot under any circumstances be considered an efficient unit.

The deficiency of men is also very great. Of course all these things are known at the War Office, and the War Office ought to set to work and correct these deficiencies. I remember some years ago discussing the question with a very distinguished officer, holding a very high position in the Army, and his final words were—

"You have never had Militia officers and you can never get them, and there is an end of it."

I do not think that is the way the thing should be looked at by an officer holding a high position, but I am afraid that is the view that has been taken hitherto by distinguished officers at the War Office. The difficulties of the Militia lie in the fact that the differences between the various regiments is so great that it is impossible to lay down any general rule. You had in former days a very large number of country gentlemen who officered your Militia regiments. As I have said before in your Lordships' House, those gentlemen have disappeared. You have not got that large number of comparatively idle young men who existed in this country twenty years ago, and therefore you cannot rely upon getting your soldiering done for you in the Militia by a certain idle class in their spare time.

If you wish to have officers for the Militia, there are only two ways of obtaining them—you must either pay them or force them. If you have compulsory service in some form—which, I hold, must come as sure as there is a sun in heaven—the whole of your difficulties will disappear. There are many ways of paying besides the physical act of putting money into a man's hand. You can offer certain privileges to those who give up their time to the service of their country. You can confine distinctions such as deputy-lieutenantships to those officers who have served in the Militia. There are, again, many appointments of a semi-military description throughout the Empire which you could confine to officers of the Militia. Why should not the Indian police be reserved exclusively for officers of Militia? It would cost the country nothing, and it would cost India nothing; and India would have this advantage, that she would recruit officers for her police who had a certain amount of military knowledge and discipline. There are other ways in which officers could be encouraged to serve in the Militia. I think a Militia officer should be exempt from serving as high sheriff, which is a very severe tax now laid on country gentlemen. Personally, I should like to see the whole of the officers of the Army come into the Army through the Militia. I think you would then get a certain amount of work done for the country by these young men who are now engaged at "crammers," doing no good to their country and probably very little good to anybody but the "crammers" who receive their fees; and those who did not get into the Army subsequently would, many of them, remain in the Militia.

These are a few of the suggestions I throw out, but what I urge most strongly on His Majesty's Government is that they should really take up this question and make up their minds to do something. A force which has lost one-third of its officers and which for many years has had a considerable deficiency in its establishment, is a force which cannot be said to be in a healthy condition. It is, indeed, perilously approaching extinction as a military force. With regard to the question of men, there are ways in which recruiting could be largely improved. You never will get the Militia put on a satisfactory basis until you make one man responsible for a unit. At this moment there are three or four people responsible. There is the commanding officer, who commands the battalion during the training; there is the officer commanding at the depot, who is the commanding officer out of the training; there is the recruiting officer, who may or may not be at the depot, and there is the adjutant. You have these four officers, either of whom could claim all the credit if the regiment was in a satisfactory state, and all of whom could disclaim responsibility if it was not. Until you make the commanding officer responsible for the regiment you can never get it in a satisfactory condition.

I should like to endorse the hope expressed by the noble Duke, that commanding officers will be given power to discharge bad characters. I could quote to your Lordships many instances of the immense amount of trouble, inconvenience, and cost to the country which the retention of one bad man in the regiment has caused. I regret the noble Earl did not allude to one incident which I think the whole Militia force deeply regrets—the abolition of the Militia Advisory Board. That board was instituted some years ago at the War Office. It consisted of six commanding officers of Militia, nominated by the generals of different districts, and at certain periods they met, and, accompanied by high officials of the War Office, discussed Militia questions. The late Secretary of State for War swept away that board. I venture to think that was one of the most unfortunate things that has ever been done. As long as the Advisory Board was in existence the Militia felt that at all events they had a channel through which expression could be given to their needs. That board has been swept away, and there is now practically no channel through which we can communicate with the high authorities at the War Office. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will see his way to reinstate the Militia Advisory Board. It was not an extravagant board; the whole of the expenses in connection with it could not have come to more than £25 a year. It gave great confidence to the Militia to feel that they had representatives of their own who were consulted from time to time by the War Office.

In conclusion, I would again most earnestly press on His Majesty's Government the importance of proceeding with the Bill which His Majesty's late Government passed through your Lordships' House, under which the Militia were liable, in the event of a great national emergency, to serve abroad. It would be impossible to conceive a more unsatisfactory condition of things than that which now obtains. The moment war breaks out the militiaman is asked to volunteer for service abroad. I have always looked upon that as a great mistake. It is really fraudulent. It is like the action of our grandfathers, who, while they pretended to keep up the Army and Navy by voluntary enlistment, kept up both by compulsion. You put officers especially in a most unfortunate and unfair position, especially officers who are married men with families. It is the unanimous opinion of the Militia that if the whole force were liable to serve abroad in a case of great national emergency it would raise the status of the Militia and make the force feel that at last it had got a settled position among the forces of the Crown.

*Lord HAVERSHAM: My Lords, I rise with unfeigned diffidence to address your Lordships' House for the first time. My only excuse for taking part in this debate is my former connection, for some years, with the War Department, and the fact that for the last five years I have had very unwillingly to take a leading part on the Front Opposition Bench in discussions of this character in another place. I venture to think that there could hardly be any subject more important than that which the noble Viscount has brought forward this evening, because I think if there was one matter upon which the people of this country gave their decided opinion in the recent election, it was that some steps must be taken to reduce, if possible, the enormous sum of £29,750,000, which we now spend on the Army of this country. But, as the Secretary of State has impressed upon us, the only possible way of reducing, to any large extent, the cost of the Army, is by reducing the number of men; and if you do that you must look to the second line, and be sure that the men you have behind can take their place, and are capable of expansion when time of emergency arises.

I do not believe there is any assembly in this country which is so capable of discussing particular subjects in connection with the Army as your Lordships' House. I have listened with the greatest instruction and pleasure to those debates which have been initiated by the noble Duke who spoke second to-night, and by many other noble Lords, and I think it must be from the fact that there are so many noble Lords who have themselves taken a part in the commanding and organising of the Auxiliary

Forces, that we always have an illuminating light shed on all these subjects. It was not possible for the Secretary of State in his exhaustive speech to deal in detail with all the particular elements of the question, and, therefore, I think that in dealing with this question of the Militia your Lordships' House is well occupied, and the results of the discussion will, I am sure, be conveyed by my noble friend below me to the Secretary of State, and will be well weighed by him and the Army Council.

There is one matter which, I think, makes this debate particularly opportune at this moment. We have to acknowledge that the Militia has lately gone through a period of extreme peril. It was not so very long ago that we had a direct statement from the then Secretary of State for War that he intended to abolish the Militia altogether, and to divide the armed forces of the country into two bodies, one of which should be composed of men of long service who should serve abroad, and the other, of men enlisted for only two years service, who never were to leave these shores, and who were to constitute what he called a territorial Army. Of all the proposals I think the worst was the amalgamating of the Militia, and the causing of it to lose its local *status* by making it part of the territorial Army. In the summary of his speech which he issued with the Army Estimates the then Secretary of State for War said that when economy was so earnestly and universally demanded, and when it was conceded that economy could only be obtained by reducing the men maintained, they must begin with the least efficient. Why, he asked, should not the Militia be entirely absorbed in the territorial Army? He added—

> "There will be an improvement in the Militia if public opinion will allow the amalgamation of the Militia with the Line, for the purpose of forming a true territorial Army."

I venture to think that that was a method of improving the Militia by wiping it off the face of the earth, and if we lose the Militia we should be denuding our military forces of one of their best arms.

I do not share the gloomy views of the Militia which some noble Lords entertain. Although I deeply deplore that there has been a decrease of 6,000 men in the recruits, after all what is the falling off in the strength of the Militia? Why, 600 men only. It was 86,491, it is now 85,814. Independently of that, which is a mere trifling reduction, there are certain features, if you look at the recruiting returns, which give a silver lining to the cloud, and make us think that matters are not altogether so bad as they seem. In the first place, there is an increase this year of 1,000 in the re-engaged men, and there is a decrease of 1,600 in the number we have lost by desertion. If the desertions have decreased by 1,600 and the re-engagements have increased by 1,000, surely that shows that the Militia is not so discontented as we are led to believe. In regard to the falling off in the number of recruits you must take into consideration the fact that in November, 1904, the standard of recruits was raised, and you have in addition to that a stricter examination for the men. You have both a closer physical examination and an examination into their antecedent character, and it is to that examination that the authorities say we mainly owe the falling off in the number of recruits. They say that while the recruits themselves are certainly not quite equal in physique to the Line, yet at the same time they rapidly improve by the better diet and the better conditions under which they live. I am sure all must rejoice to find that their character has been exceedingly satisfactory, and that that improvement is mainly due to the stricter examination made into their antecedent character.

I should like to say one or two words as to how we can popularise the Militia force. I think one of the wisest proposals of the Norfolk Commission was that for the future the Militia should be exercised, or, at any rate, that two trainings out of three should take place, in the neighbourhood of their county town. It is only human that the men and officers should like to show themselves in uniform among their own friends. They like to be seen at drill and at recreation, and so far as the officers are concerned there is a unanimous opinion, I believe, that many would be retained if they could give an afternoon or so a week to their own business. I think it would be an excellent thing if the plan could be adopted by the War Office of two out of three trainings being held in the neighbourhood of the county town. Then it may be said, "But they must have brigade drill." I never could see why you could not brigade Militia regiments of contiguous counties. Take the case of the Berkshire Militia, the Oxfordshire Militia, and the Buckinghamshire Militia, which are all in contiguous counties. It so happens that in the neighbourhood of each county town there are excellent opportunities for drill. It may be said that if you drill Militia regiments together they will only strive to become equal to the best Militia regiment, and will not see their own faults. But what could possibly be easier than to bring down from Aldershot by train, and station, say, at Reading, two battalions of the Regular troops under an excellent and experienced brigadier. There you would have a force of five battalions which would enable brigade drill to be carried out effectively. Recollect that the alternative is to take the Militia for their whole training to Salisbury Plain, or Aldershot. Sir William Butler says on that subject—

> "I do not see the necessity of assembling men who are only half trained and who can only be half trained, in large masses in isolated and desolate places like Salisbury Plain. You kill recruiting by it."

That is what we have to look to. If such training is of use to the brigadiers, and possibly to those commanding battalions, it is not of the slightest use to the private in the ranks, who goes home having seen nothing, having understood nothing, and having wasted precious time.

The real way to increase the number of the men is by entering into some sort of arrangement with the large employers of labour. That is done with singular success in the case of the Northumberland Militia. That Militia—a letter from whose adjutant I hold in my hand—has entered into an arrangement with the directors of the Elswick Works, and these men take their holidays by going out for twenty-seven days with the Militia. The adjutant says—

> "Large employers of labour in Northumberland encourage their men to become Militiamen for the following reason:—The Northumbrian is a hard worker. He gets stale. He goes for twenty-seven days Militia training in the free pure air. He is fed well and regularly, and goes back to work like a giant refreshed. Consequently the works reap the benefit; hence we find very little difficulty in recruiting."

Lord Haversham.

*LORD RAGLAN: Is that artillery or infantry?

*LORD HAVERSHAM: Infantry. What proves such a success in the case of the Northumbrian, might surely be carried out in the south. Why should not the Berkshire Militia enter into communication with Messrs. Huntley and Palmer and the proprietors of other large works? Surely this would be equally easy in the neighbourhoods of Manchester and Liverpool; it only requires a little organisation. The arrangement in Northumberland is popular both with the Elswick Works and the Militia authorities.

I cannot agree with the noble Lord who spoke last and who expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government would reintroduce the Bill for making the Militia liable, on embodiment, to serve abroad. I confess that I once thought that that would be a good thing. I thought it would add to the *status* of the Militia on the one hand, and give the authorities a certainty of having a certain number of men to send abroad on the other. But I understand that it is regarded with the greatest possible jealousy and dislike by some of the best regiments in the country. I know one case—and this is a case of a regiment whose complement of officers is full and which has 900 men in the ranks—where the officers signed a roundrobin to the effect that they would resign their commissions if that Bill passed

LORD SALTOUN: Will the noble Lord give the name of that regiment?

*LORD HAVERSHAM: I would prefer not to do so; it would be rather invidious.

*LORD RAGLAN: I think I could name it.

*LORD HAVERSHAM: But even if the Bill were passed it would be of no great advantage, because you get the men already. The men are sure to volunteer for service abroad in the case of grave national emergency. One word with regard to the officers. I endorse most fully what has fallen from noble Lords opposite with regard to the position of the commanding officer. You would never initiate such a system as we have now. You have a man responsible to the Crown for a large number of men, and you do not give him power of appointment, transfer, or promotion, of any non-commissioned officers on the permanent staff. The whole thing is most ridiculous. By the Militia regulations I do not believe the commanding officer is able to see his own recruits except once a year, and then by suffrance. The Norfolk Commission said on that point that the opinion of commanding officers should be as far as possible considered in reference to appointments, transfers, promotions, etc. Sir Alfred Turner declared that the commanding officer goes out of existence so far as his battalion is concerned after training. That is, I think, a very bad system. The Duke of Connaught declared that the Militia commanding officer ought always to command and to have supervision of the regiment during the whole time he is commanding.

I suppose that next to the commanding officer we ought to consider the adjutant as the most important officer, particularly in a Militia regiment. I hope that the greatest possible care will be taken in the selection of these officers and that they will be regarded as responsible as adjutants in the Line. If a battalion is brought up to a high pitch of perfection and the adjutant does his duty satisfactorily he should be rewarded by a staff appointment. With regard to the proposal to interest lords-lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants more in this matter. I was glad the Secretary of State declared that he did not see why we should not make it a condition of the appointment of lords-lieutenant that they should be persons taking an interest in the organisation of the Militia. I can remember the time when the Leicestershire and the Nottingham Militia were 1,000 strong. The reason for the popularity of those regiments was that the Duke of Rutland of that day, who was honorary colonel, took the greatest interest in them, always attending the reviews and inspections. The Northumberland Militia is in a very good state, both as regards officers and men, and the reason for that is attributed to the fact that the battalions are respected, and have been raised to their present pitch owing to the interest taken in the force by the Duke of Northumberland and his family, and by the county gentlemen of Northumberland. If this spirit could be instilled into county gentlemen in other parts of the country, and the forces respected, instead of being looked down upon, the officer question would be solved. If county gentlemen could be induced to take up commissions the old constitutional force would, I think, once again take its place as the premier auxiliary force of the country—a position worthy of its ancient memories, and worthy of its former fame.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, I have listened to a number of military debates in this House, but I have never listened to one which left a more hopeless impression on my mind. Almost every speaker up to now has made some suggestion or other with reference to the improvement of the force, or the increasing of its popularity. To my mind, it is not a question of improving the Militia at all. The question is, is it possible to keep the Militia itself in existence at all? As far as I am able to gather, not only from what I have heard this afternoon but from other sources, the Militia is actually perishing before our eyes, in spite of the fact that, according to the present Secretary of State for War, we are now spending upon the Militia £21 19s. 3d. per head, whereas ten years ago the cost of the Militia was only £13 10s. per head. I do not know what moral this conveys to the rest of the House, but to me it conveys the impression that it would be quite impossible to find any more decisive condemnation of what you are pleased to call the voluntary system. I presume there are people—possibly a majority of those assembled here—who still believe in the efficacy of that exploded system, but I have never heard any more convincing proof of the absolute failure of the so-called voluntary system than what has come out to-day.

We have been told by various speakers that the Militia are so many thousand men short, but this does not come upon us in the light of a revelation. It was all brought before us in the Report of the Norfolk Commission—the only Report, by the way, which we have had for many years past of any real value to us with regard to military affairs. In the Report of that Commission the position is put in a nutshell. The Commission state—

> "Under the present system there would seem to be an incessant effort to exact from the Militia and the Volunteers, in the name of the State, more than the State will pay for and more than it has any right to demand."

The Commission went on to point out that every Power has abandoned the idea that war is the exclusive business of a limited class, and has subjected its male population to a thorough military training. What further explanation do you want than that? In other words, we are continually endeavouring to do what every other nation has long ago given up.

We have heard a variety of recommendations and suggestions this afternoon. I do not know whether my noble friend who initiated this discussion was satisfied with the reply that he received from the Under-Secretary of State for War, but I must confess that personally, if I had been in his place, I should have derived no satisfaction from it whatever, because it appeared to me to amount to a mere pious expression of opinion that the Government were well aware of the inestimable services of the Militia, and that if they were given time, and if the present Secretary of State for War in particular was given time, eventually things would be brought round to a thoroughly satisfactory condition. I seem to have heard expressions of this kind frequently before. Since I have had anything to do with politics I have seen six Secretaries of State for War, beginning with Mr. Edward Stanhope and ending with the present occupant of that office, and, strange though it may appear, I have never been able to see any real distinction between the eminent persons who have occupied that position, though much of their time has been taken up in pointing out the shortcomings of their predecessors. There may be differences, but they are not perceptible to my mind. The results are in every case precisely the same.

I may add that I have always observed exactly the same phenomena with regard to Secretaries of State for War. When a Government is formed and a person appointed Secretary of State for War, universal approval is expressed on all sides as to the choice of this gentleman, who is pointed out as the one man absolutely fitted to put everything right. In course of time this paragon makes a speech and after he has done so the applause becomes still more vociferous. Everyone declares that he has shown, as everybody expected, that he was *the* man absolutely suited to the post. At a subsequent period this statesman produces what is generally known as a scheme, and then, if possible, the feeling of admiration which is felt for him increases, and although people, as a rule, do not understand the scheme very clearly, yet they all say the same thing. "Here," they say, "is a statesman who has at last grasped the rudiments of the case, a man who does understand the necessities of the Empire." This paragon, as I say, produces his scheme, and then there is silence. After about six months have elapsed it suddenly appears to strike people that our military system is in very much the same position at it was before, and when a year has elapsed this paragon has probably become the most unpopular member of the Ministry, and the question really is as to who shall throw the biggest brickbat at his head when the first opportunity occurs. As the present Secretary of State is a gentleman of a philosophic turn of mind, he has no doubt anticipated that in the course of a year or two the cloud of unpopularity will descend on his head. I repeat that I have never been able to see any difference between these distinguished men, because they have all been engaged during their tenure of office in what I might term shuffling and re-shuffling the military pack in the hope of discovering five aces instead of only four.

There is not much consolation to be derived from the suggestions that have been made or from the statement of the Under-Secretary. I turn to the suggestions that have been made by my noble friend behind me, the Duke of Bedford. The noble Duke is well known as a highly efficient officer who has taken the greatest interest in the Militia, but I entirely fail to realise the value of the suggestions he has made. There appears to be in this House a touching confidence in the power of lords-lieutenant, and it was a great satisfaction to me to find that this feeling was entertained by democratics opposite like Lord Haversham. He evidently entertained a sub lime confidence in the power of lords-lieutenant, with regard to which I am not so absolutely sure myself. After all, what can they do? What means have they for forcing either men or officers to enter the Militia? There is only one means that occurs to me by which they could exercise their power, and that would be by some means of social pressure. My noble friend, in his capacity as Lord-Lieutenant, might give a vast garden-party and induce every other lord-lieutenant in the country to do the same, for the express purpose of leaving out those gentleman who decline to join the Militia force.

Then my noble friend has another suggestion. If the Militia force cannot be created by the action of lords-lieutenant, let it be created by the action of deputy-lieutenants. I think I am not wrong in attributing to my noble friend the scheme by which every deputy-lieutenant would be liable for one-third of a Militia officer, and I think he intimated that in his opinion every deputy-lieutenant who failed in conjunction with his two colleagues to produce a Militia officer should be deprived of his commission. I confess I do not see how that could work. I, for instance, am a deputy-lieutenant. Suppose there is a shortage of Militia officers in my district. I presume I must call a meeting, collect everybody I can from the district, and address them in as pathetic terms as I can, saying: "Here am I, a Deputy-Lieutenant. Now, for God's sake, some of you go and join the Militia or I shall lose my commission." What effect does my noble friend think they would have on my hearers? The impression upon them would be very much the same as that which was created on the mind of the Irish landlord when he was told that his agent would be shot. They would tell me probably, in more or less polite language, that it was matter a of supreme indifference to them whether I was a deputy-lieutenant or not; and I think they would be perfectly justified. There have been other remedies suggested. The noble Duke who spoke second in the debate this evening suggested that if a sufficient number of men were not found by a locality, that locality should be fined. I imagine that more than half the districts of the country would have to be fined, and all those districts would necessarily be represented by Members in Parliament, and I should not envy a Government the task of keeping a majority in the House of Commons if a large number of its supporters represented what may be called defaulting districts. These remedies appear to me to be absolutely useless. I do not wish to labour the question of compulsion, but I do hope, before this session is concluded that we may fight this question out and that the noble and gallant Earl, Lord Roberts, who I regret is not in his place to-day, will bring forward a Motion asserting the absolute necessity of introducing some system of universal training. I should like to see the opinion of this House taken upon it.

In the meanwhile, I would point out that if you really want to put the Militia on a sound footing, and if you really mean to have that reserve Army which you all profess to desire, there is only one way of having it, and that is by adopting the conclusions of the Norfolk Commission. A force such as I have mentioned, capable of meeting European troops, not outside this country, but in this country, can only be raised on one principle—namely, that of universal liability to training, and my personal opinion is that remedies such as have been suggested this afternoon are little better than a mere beating of the air, and that we shall not make any satisfactory progress until some form of compulsory service is adopted in this country.

Lord BURGHCLERE: My Lords, the House always listens to my noble friend opposite with pleasure and amusement, and I am certain that we have followed his remarks in that spirit this evening. My noble friend made some attack on the present Secretary of State. He said he thought that Mr. Haldane would eventually prove as destitute of popularity as those Secretaries of State who have preceded him in that high office. I venture to think that there is a great difference between the policy of the present Secretary of State and that of his predecessors. If my noble friend will carry his recollection back not so long ago he will remember that Secretary of State after Secretary of State came down to this House with a fully-fledged scheme of reform in his pocket very shortly after having entered upon office. I remember Secretaries of State and Under-Secretaries of State who seemed to count their chickens before they were hatched, and in many cases counted chickens which were never hatched at all. But if I may say so of the present Secretary of State without disrespect, he does not try to number chickens which may be hatched in the future; his attitude is rather that of a brooding hen, and I have no doubt that in time we shall reap the reward of that patience which he asks the country to exercise pending the result of his deliberations.

I cannot help remembering other debates which have taken place in this House on the question of the Militia. I well remember one in 1904, when we discussed one of those fully-fledged schemes to which I alluded just now, and which was brought before the country by the then Secretary of State, Mr. Arnold-Forster. The pivot of that scheme was the question we are debating this afternoon. Mr. Arnold-Forster at that time proposed to absorb thirty-three battalions of the Militia into the territorial Army which he was then going to create, and he also proposed to abolish the remaining battalions of Militia. That was to effect a saving of £1,800,000, the cost at that time of the Militia. We were told then, as we are told now, that the condition of the Militia was unsatisfactory. I remember that Lord Selborne in that debate declared that the Militia was profoundly unsatisfactory. He said—

> "The Militia is what the War Office has made it, and the War Office alone is responsible for its failure and shortcomings. The military officials at the War Office know nothing about the Militia at all."

I conclude from what I have heard this afternoon that, in the opinion of those able to judge, the conditions of the Militia are very much the same now as they were then. But, my Lords, I did not rise to make a speech on the Militia. I rose to call attention to one passage in the Secretary of State's speech which bears on the question of the Militia and the Volunteers, and is, therefore, germane to the matter now under discussion. The Secretary of State, in his speech, adumbrated a sort of citizen army composed of the Militia and the Volunteers, in order to effect those economies which both sides of the House are anxious to secure in regard to the administration of the War Office. He said that he looked to the use of men who did not give the whole of their time to military service to bring about economy in Army expenditure. Supposing the Secretary of State is able to create this citizen army, it seems to me there will still remain the essence, the crux, of the problem which Mr. Arnold-Forster himself had to face in his scheme—that is to say, whether the soldiers of that citizen army will be bound to serve abroad.

If economy is going to be brought about by the creation of a citizen army and the preservation of the Militia, it follows that my right hon. friend the Secretary of State will have to cut down his striking force to its effective minimum. Then, in moments of danger, having reduced his striking force to its lowest limit, he must be absolutely certain of the Reserves he calls out from the Militia. He must not leave it to them to volunteer. If he did, he might find it somewhat difficult to get men; although I must admit that the Militia hitherto have volunteered when it has been necessary. But if my noble friend is going to rely on the Militia and the Volunteers for effective aid to a striking force of the regular Army, which he has cut down to its lowest possible limits, difficulty will certainly arise unless he is able to call on the whole of these men to go to his aid in the event of a great crisis abroad. I only put this point because it has not been alluded to this afternoon. I do not bring it forward by way of criticism of the Secretary of State. My right hon. friend made a speech putting forward his policy. It was a speech as statesmanlike as it was modest, and as modest as it was statesmanlike, and that speech has given him, not only the confidence of the nation, but, what I venture to think is a great deal more important, the confidence of the Army itself.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, after the epithets which were applied by my noble friend Lord Newton to the oratory which has been poured out this evening, I am rather diffident in rising to address your Lordships, but I can promise, after what has been said by my noble friends behind me who represent the Militia, that I shall be brief. I note the promise which Lord Newton makes that we are to have what I presume he would permit me to call a National Service League debate shortly, or, at all events, before the conclusion of the session. I for one will welcome that debate. We have been accustomed during the last few months to almost weekly pronouncements of policy by the National Service League. I am sure we shall welcome the opportunity of hearing once more a pronouncement of their views in your Lordships' House, and I think that most of us will also welcome the opportunity of again beating them in the division lobbies.

I entirely reciprocate what was said by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary as to the necessity of treating the subject before us with an absence of Party feeling. It is perhaps natural that noble Lords opposite, after the result of the general election, which I have no doubt they found very satisfactory, should be anxious to treat everything with an absence of Party feeling; but in this particular case I am sure we shall be most anxious to meet the noble Earl half-way. I think nothing proves more accurately the absence of Party feeling when these subjects are discussed in your Lordships' House than the impartial way in which Militia colonels attack the representative of the War Office, no matter to which Party he belongs.

The first point to which I would like to refer is the subject of signalling. I was rather disappointed that the noble Earl did not amplify a little more fully his remarks on that subject. I have been told of regiments which had hitherto been doing signalling, but which under the new orders are debarred from continuing it. One particular regiment has been singled out by the General Officer Commanding as a fit regiment to carry on their signalling exercises, but under the recent War Office decision these regiments are not permitted to do signalling any longer. I admit that the noble Earl the Under-Secretary holds out a possible hope that they may be able to resume at some future time, but for one training, at any rate, these regiments will be debarred from signalling exercises, and a great deal of the efforts they have made in the past will be wasted, even though next year they are allowed to continue. Signalling is a matter with which a man should keep constantly in touch, if he is to be of any use. I would suggest that the decision, at any rate of the particular regiment to which I have referred, should be reconsidered.

With regard to the abolition of the Militia Advisory Board, which was deplored by Lord Raglan, I would like to say a word. This is a matter in which I am not now individually concerned, but I hope we shall never see the Militia Advisory Board at the War Office again. I believe the noble Earl opposite has the advantage of an infinitely better system. He has a colonel of Militia at the War Office always at his beck and call, and I believe that to be a far better channel for communication between the heads of the War Office and the Militia than the Advisory Board. As to the accusation of Lord Haversham, whose maiden speech we all welcomed, that we were anxious two years ago to reform the Militia by wiping it out of existence, I must protest against that statement. I have repeatedly had to argue against the view that it correctly represents what we proposed two years ago, and I am not going to repeat the same arguments now. I content myself with stating that I deny its accuracy.

I recognise the experiment which the War Office is going to carry out as an old friend. It was worked out in the Adjutant-General's Department last autumn. One of our last actions as an Army Council, before noble Lords opposite succeeded us, was to discuss that scheme; and I think I recognise in the very short paragraph referring to this matter in the Memorandum on the Army Estimates the main headlines of the scheme we then discussed.

LORD LOVAT: Was it not the direct recommendation of the Norfolk Commission?

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: Yes. The scheme was based on some of the recommendations of the Norfolk Commission. It must not, however, be forgotten that those recommendations required a great deal of working out in the War Office before they could be acted upon or even adopted. But there are one or two omissions from the scheme which we discussed at the end of last November — omissions in the announcement made by the Secretary of State for War, omissions also in the speech of the Under-Secretary this evening. I should like very much if some member of His Majesty's Government would tell us, firstly, if these omissions are to be made, and secondly, why they are made. The first omission was referred to shortly by the noble Earl. We had discussed this scheme and given it practical approval. We are gratified to see that the present Government have adopted some of the suggestions we viewed with a favourable eye, but still we had discussed the question of organisation, and had practically agreed that a brigade organisation was necessary, and that the Militia was to be organised in brigades under a permanent commander. I would like to ask, is that organisation into brigades definitely dropped, or is it dropped pending further consideration? Is it part of the scheme still, and only left out for the obvious reason that you cannot put the whole scheme into a short Memorandum such as that which precedes the Army Estimates?

I would also like to ask a question as to the Royal Garrison Artillery. The Royal Garrison Artillery have a number of Militia regiments which have never been included in any defence scheme of any kind. They are most of them in Ireland, and the story we were all told was that when they were raised a hundred years ago it was thought safer to give forty Irishmen one big gun between them than a musket each. But what is going to be done with these seventeen or eighteen regiments of Garrison Artillery? Are they going to be retained, or are they to be reduced? War Office Committees have nearly always recommended that they should be done away with. Last autumn suggestions were brought forward that they might be useful as ammunition columns. I should like to know if His Majesty's Government have considered the future of these regiments.

The last omission from this scheme, which was referred to by my noble friend Lord Raglan, is far the most serious—namely, what is going to be done about the Militia Bill which was passed by your Lordships' House last year? That Bill was opposed by the noble Marquess opposite, the present Leader of the House; but I think he will permit me to say that he did not express any very great objection to the principle of the Bill, but objected to it because we did not state enough as to what we were going to do in regard to the Militia. When this matter came up for discussion at the Army Council last autumn there was no doubt in the mind of any member of that body that practically this whole scheme depended on the Bill's being passed. I have documentary proof of it here. Those who were then my military colleagues at the War Office felt it of the very highest importance that we should employ money primarily to improve parts of our Army which were to be o use to us in service abroad. There isf really little objection to the Bill from the Militia, and there is nothing but the strongest enthusiasm for it among the military authorities at the War Office. I know that soldiers are very anxious to see this Bill passed, and I do hope that His Majesty's Government will be able to tell us that they intend to again present it to Parliament and to pass it into law. I am convinced that it will be of the very highest advantage both directly and indirectly to the military forces of the Crown.

I have only one other matter that I feel it my duty to bring before your Lordships. It is a matter that does not concern the War Office, though it does concern the Militia and His Majesty's Government. The noble Earl the Under-Secretary quoted certain reasons, the cogency of which no one will deny, for the deficiency in numbers of officers, and, above all for my particular purpose, men in the Militia. The annual report of the Inspector-General on recruiting, which has just been presented to Parliament, contains the following paragraph—

> "In Ireland articles in the Press have been published and placards posted to deter intending recruits from enlisting, and in England publications and leaflets have been issued by societies averse to military service. Thirteen leaflets published by one society were received in this office."

We are a very tolerant nation, and are becoming more tolerant every day, but it is getting a little strong, I think, when we stand open and unchecked attempts to influence people not to serve their country. It is no new thing; it has been going on for some considerable time, and at the risk of wearying your Lordships, I would ask you to listen to some specimens of the sort of thing that has been published in Ireland during the last year or two. Here is a case of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Ireland, a body on a par with the Amateur Athletic Association in England. The rules of this Association, according to an extract from the *Freeman's Journal* of 19th August last year, provide that—

> "Permits shall not be granted to promoters of athletic meetings held under the auspices of the constabulary or any other section of the British garrison; that police, soldiers, militiamen, or sailors of the Royal Navy shall not be allowed to compete at athletic meetings held under such auspices, and that no permit shall be granted to a sports promoting body that would allow a military or police band to be present."

On 5th August last year the Dublin *Leader* contained an account of a speech made at Tallow by a certain Father Kavanagh. Father Kavanagh said—

> "If the majority of professed Irishmen were sincere in their profession, would England find in the Irish people a nation from which she always could recruit her Army and Navy?"

At the same meeting Mr. Davitt said—

> "Why should any Irishman join the English Army? Can any honest, self-respecting countryman offer a solitary reason why the English Army is or ought to be one iota less objectionable to young Irishmen than the Russian Army is to the men of Finland?"

I hope I am not wearying your Lordships, but I think it right that the House should be made aware of these things. In the *Irish Times* of 14th September last year there is an account of a meeting of the Gaelic League held in St. Patrick's School, Strokestown, at which the following resolution was passed—

> "We are of opinion that it is the duty of all Gaelic Leaguers, although the Gaelic League is a non-political association, to be disloyal to the British Government and her representatives in this country, to weaken its influence as far as possible, and in particular to use all their efforts to prevent all classes of our countrymen from enlisting in the British Army as long as the Government continue to show their utter contempt for everything Irish."

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): The noble Earl is wandering from the subject before the House.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: The noble Marquess accuses me of wandering from the subject. Have anti-recruiting placards and resolutions nothing whatever to do with the Militia? I think they have. I am sorry if I am boring the noble Marquess.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I am not bored.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I have in my hand an extract which goes to show that this sort of thing is going on even now, when we are all living so happily under the Government of noble Lords opposite. A placard which was circulated in County Longford during the last week in December, called upon Irishmen to—

> "Make a vow that you will not recognise or mix with any man who dons the livery of an Irish slave—a red or black coat, or blue jacket—and keep your children from mixing with this anti-Irish horde—the slaughterers of the innocent Boer women and children."

And I may inform your Lordships that a testimonial is being got up to a gentleman who has just come out of gaol after serving nine months for distributing these placards.

The point I wish to enforce is this. This agitation has been going on in Ireland for a year; its primary object is to sow dissension between the two countries, and to engender a separatist feeling. I do not pretend that I think that that feeling will be very unpopular with noble Lords opposite, but its secondary effect must be to affect recruiting in Ireland. My right hon. friend Mr. Walter Long certainly checked this movement by prosecuting the prime movers in it whenever he could catch them; but all prosecutions in this matter have been stopped by the present Chief Secretary. Let us understand that noble Lords opposite, in stopping these prosecutions, are doing so with their eyes open. Let us know that they realise the results which will follow; and if recruiting in Ireland shows a still further diminution, as rumours tell us it is beginning to do, do not let us be told that the county interest in the Militia is being lost, and that the Volunteers are competing with the Militia. If noble Lords opposite choose to let this movement—this very wrong movement, as I claim it to be—go on, they must be prepared to take the consequences, and it will not lie in their mouths to grumble at any diminution of recruiting in Ireland as the result of these highly seditious publications.

*Lord MONKSWELL: My Lords, I should like to draw attention to a statement made in the other House by the Secretary of State for War, who gave what is to me a new version of the "blue-water" school, and one which seems to be of the utmost importance. The Secretary of State declared that in his view, not only can there be no invasion of England in force, but that there cannot even be a raid of 5,000 or 10,000 troops. If this is the deliberate opinion of the Secretary of State for War, and if he finds that the country is with him in that opinion, surely it foreshadows a most revolutionary change in regard to the Auxiliary Forces. What the Norfolk Commission said of the Militia was that they existed chiefly, and that the Volunteers existed solely, with a view to resisting invasion.

It appears to me that the new view of the "blue-water" school is totally different from that which was put forward last year in this House when the Militia Bill was being discussed. At that time noble Lords accepted the view that there was a possibility of an invasion of this country by a small foreign force and that the Militia and Volunteers—the Auxiliary Forces in general—must be maintained partly, if not solely, for the purpose of resisting invasion. But now we are told that there is no possibility of invasion. Consequently our Army is for the future to be what I may call a triple-expansion Army. The first expansion is to be when you call out the Reserves; the second takes place on the embodiment of the Militia; and the third when you call upon the Volunteers to fight outside this country, because it seems they will never be called upon to fight within the country. In these circumstances it seems to me difficult to imagine that the Secretary of State for War will not make the Militia liable to foreign service, because if you do not make the Militia so liable, and if you say definitely that never under any circumstances can they be called upon to fight in this country, you will do away altogether with the utility of that force. It is perfectly true that last year I voted against the Militia having liability for foreign service thrown upon them on embodiment. The noble Marquess the Leader of the House, who also objected to the proposal, did so simply on the ground that it was not part of a general scheme; that it was, I think he called it, an isolated change. That was the principal reason why he objected to the Militia on embodiment being available for foreign service. One word with regard to a small point taken up by Lord Raglan. I would suggest to Lord Raglan that he should not press his suggestion that Militia officers should be eligible to serve in the Indian Police, because for that service special qualifications are required, in particular a knowledge of the native languages and of law.

*Lord RAGLAN: But do they learn the languages before they go to the country?

*Lord MONKSWELL: I did not understand the noble Lord to suggest that Militia officers should go through the examination at present gone through for the Indian Police.

*Lord RAGLAN: I meant that.

*Lord MONKSWELL: That, of course, alters the position. Before sitting down I would express the hope that the noble Marquess the Leader of the House will give your Lordships some light and leading on the important point as to whether the Militia, on embodiment, are, or are not, to be liable for foreign service.

*The Marquess of RIPON: My Lords, I do not think that my noble friend who has just sat down quite rightly understood what was said by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War. I do not remember his having said anything exactly of the kind my noble friend has suggested, but I will inform myself as to what was the exact statement made on that subject. On the main subject which has been discussed to-night we have had a very interesting debate. We have had many interesting debates on the Militia in this House, always, I am afraid, in the same tone, that the Militia is in an unsatisfactory condition. It has been so, I am sorry to say, for a long time. It is highly important, it is a matter of the greatest importance, that steps should be taken to alter that condition of things and to bring about a more satisfactory state of matters. But it is the view of my right hon. friend the Secretary of State and of His Majesty's Government, that after so many Army schemes of one sort and another, sometimes very wide and very extensive, and sometimes dealing only with individual points, have been before the public and Parliament, the time has come when the general question of Army organisation, and of the Militia as part of the general question, ought to be deliberately considered in all its bearings by the Government, and that no partial expression of opinion, except on minor points, should be given to the public until time has been taken for full and deliberate consideration.

His Majesty's Government have been in office but a short time. I think it would have been very wrong on the part of my right hon. friend if he had attempted to deal hastily with this question. We have had Secretaries of State with preconceived opinions on this subject, who have entered on office with the intention of carrying those opinions into effect. They have not been a success; those schemes have one and all broken down. My right hon. friend Mr Haldane does not desire to put forward another scheme of that kind, and I think, my Lords, that he is acting wisely in that course. He is entitled to the support of Parliament when he declines to commit himself to the details of arrangements connected with general Army organisation until such time as he has had full opportunity, after the freest and most intimate concert and consultation with his expert advisers, to present a general scheme, and if the statement which it has been in the power of my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for War to make to this House to-night seems to any extent to be limited and narrow, it is because my right hon. friend does not desire to enter piecemeal into this question, but to deal with it, as I have said, as a whole.

The noble Earl opposite alluded especially to the Militia Bill of last year. I took objection to that Bill on various grounds when it was passing through this House. The principal point that I put forward was that it was undesirable to deal partially with a large question of that kind. To that opinion I adhere. That is the opinion of my right hon. friend, and, therefore, there is, as far as I know, no intention of proposing that Bill again this session. I was, I confess, a little surprised to find that the noble Earl opposite attached such extreme importance to that measure, and that he thought it was of such vital interest that it should be passed. Noble Lords opposite could have passed it last year. They sent the Bill down to the House of Commons; it was there in the hands of the then Government with their majority, but they refused to pass it, preferring to pass the Aliens Bill. I think, therefore, that my noble friend has no right to speak as if we were neglecting our duty in this respect because we hesitate to play the game which was played last year, and because we preferr to deal with this question as a whole.

I did not intend to interrupt the noble Earl in another part of his speech. I made a remark to my noble friend beside me which reached the quick ears of my noble friend, but I still think that he did wander from the subject on the notice of the Paper. The subject of the notice relates entirely to the Militia. The extracts which the noble Earl read from the newspapers and placards in Ireland related to the subject of recruiting generally, and I do think that the noble Earl was somewhat out of order. I am quite sure that if the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had the authority in this House which the Speaker has in the other House, my noble friend would have been called to order. All I have to say on that matter is this, I do not believe that placards and notices of that description have any material effect on recruiting in Ireland. The Irish people are a race of soldiers. The Irish people have, as we all know, done great and gallant service for this country, and I do not believe that ill-advised articles of that description and placards of that sort will really be found to check the Irish people from recruiting. If I am right in that opinion, it would be unwise to resort to the measures which the noble Earl sketched out. I think it is much wiser to abstain from taking stringent measures for the purpose of dealing with an evil which I believe to be in itself of comparatively little importance.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, after the speech of my noble friend Lord Newton I feel that it requires some courage on the part of one who is a Lord-Lieutenant of his county and who has been a Secretary of State for War to address even a few words to your Lordships in this debate. I cannot but consider that the matter which was mentioned at the close of his speech by my noble friend Lord Donoughmore deserves the most serious consideration. I can well understand that the noble Marquess opposite should not have been prepared to find it discussed this evening, and that he should not therefore care to pursue it further; but it does seem to me to be a matter of the gravest importance. Its importance is, I think, not to be measured by the effect of these placards and incitements upon recruiting; what is serious is that in a part of the United Kingdom ill-affected persons should be allowed with impunity to discourage their fellow-citizens from entering a service in connection with which, as the noble Marquess reminded the House, Irishmen have conferred so much distinction upon the history of this country.

Turning to the main question, your Lordships may perhaps have listened with some little disappointment to the statements vouchsafed to us from the Front Bench opposite, but I am bound to say that the appeal of the noble Marquess seemed to me a reasonable one. It is reasonable that His Majesty's Government should desire to deal with this great question of Army organisation as a whole, and we shall certainly not grudge them the time necessary for that purpose. It is true that nothing could be more unfortunate than the present condition of the Militia force; we have often had to admit it on both sides of the House.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Why?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My noble friend at the Table asks me why. One answer was given earlier in the evening by the noble Lord who spoke first, and who told us that Army reformers had only two ways of treating the Militia—obliterating it abruptly or condemning it to a lingering death. I do not admit the justice of that description. I think it would be fairer to say that there are two currents of thought with regard to the Militia. On the one hand you have the school which desires to introduce reforms of a thorough and drastic character; on the other hand you have the feeling of friends of the Militia whose frame of mind is intensely conservative; and between these two stools Militia reformers have often fallen. The Militia difficulty seems to me, indeed, to be typical of the difficulty which attends the whole question of Army organisation in this country. This country has military requirements probably more extensive geographically and more complicated than any other European nation; and yet I think it true to say that we have an Army which has never been constructed on a scientific basis, which has grown with the growth of the nation, and which therefore is irregular and overlapping in its constitution. The force which has suffered most from that condition of things is undoubtedly the Militia; it has been plundered at one end by the Line, it has been encroached on at the other by the Volunteers; and the result is that at this moment it is in the condition which was described by the Secretary of State for War when he said it had been bled white and is in a state of inanition. We are well content that time should be taken to investigate this Militia question thoroughly; and I, for one, am grateful to the Secretary of State for War, in the first place, for his frank admission that the Army, as a whole, never was more efficient than at present, and also for his readiness to examine all these questions with an open mind and with the desire as far as possible to observe continuity of military policy. For the present we are to have, with regard to the Militia, a very important experiment, and we shall watch that experiment with great interest. It contains one or two features which I regard not without a certain amount of misgiving. I am not sure whether the endeavour to require from the Militia a much longer period of training is a step which will increase the popularity of the force. Mr. Haldane described the Militiaman the other day as a soldier who was one-tenth soldier and nine-tenths civilian, and that is a consideration of which we should never lose sight. It seems to me that anything which you do to diminish the value of the militiaman as a civilian in the labour market during that part of the year when he is not occupied as a soldier is likely to render service in the Militia more onerous, and therefore less attractive, in the eyes of the public.

Again, there is the announcement with regard to winter training. It may be a very good thing; but I earnestly hope that care will be taken not to create the impression in the public mind that an attempt is being made, as I have seen it described, to transfer the cost of outdoor relief to the Army Estimates. If that impression gets abroad, the result will be deplorable. It is also part of the experiment that these more thoroughly trained Militiamen are not to be allowed, during their first year, to be transferred into the Line. That is a suggestion which appeals to me very much, but it must not be forgotten that the effect will be to deprive the Line of a large part of the recruits on which it has hitherto depended. We have been in the habit of robbing Peter to pay Paul, and if we stop doing so Paul will have to go short. I understand from the noble Marquess that the mind of the Secretary of State is open upon the subject of the Bill rendering Militiamen liable for service abroad, and that we are not to infer that it has been dropped. We regard it as a measure of very great importance—and that is not less true because we were unable to find a sufficient amount of Parliamentary time to pass it into law last session. My reason for considering the Bill of very great importance is this. I cannot conceive of any arrangement under which we should be able to avoid occasionally and in times of emergency employing the Militia beyond the limits of these islands; and, if we are to do that, we should do it under statutory powers and not by means of the kind of extemporised arrangements which used to be made and to which I have heard the strongest exception taken in debate in this House. Militia battalions used to be publicly paraded and invited to declare then and at once whether they would or would not undertake the liability for foreign service. Of course in the circumstances it was almost impossible for them to say "No," and very disagreeable things used to be said as to the kind of moral pressure put upon them in order to obtain their consent. That can only be avoided by imposing on the Militia a statutory liability to serve abroad at certain contingencies.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: What about compulsory service?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My noble friend asks me about compulsory service. I have very often ventured to tell your Lordships that in my opinion compulsory service was not likely to be regarded with favour in this country, and I for one shall base my hopes on the attempts of His Majesty's Government to solve this Militia problem without having recourse to compulsion in any shape or form.

JUDICATURE BILL [H.L.]

Bill read 3ª (according to Order.)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, I have a small Amendment to move, the object of which is to provide that one of the solicitors who is to be a member of the Rule Committee shall not necessarily be a member of the Incorporated Law Society.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, to leave out from the word 'solicitors' to the word ('to') in line 10, and to insert the words 'one being a member of the Council of the Law Society, and the other being a member of the Law Society and also of a provincial Law Society.'"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 19*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.: Dover Harbour Board Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

Millwall Dock Bill; North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Mid-Oxfordshire Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Metropolitan Water Board Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Land Values (Assessment and Rating). Petition of the London County Council, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

They have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Elizabeth Caroline Wallis with Henry Aubrey Beaumont Wallis, commonly called Aubrey Wallis, her present husband, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." [Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords.]

Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITION.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; from Albury and Tiddington (two); Aspull; Bardsea; Beeford; Broughton; Chorlton on Medlock (two); Cuddesdon; Eythorne (two); Hawridge (two); Heydon (two); Hull; Kingston upon Hull; Levenshulme; Ollerton (two); Rochford; Shevington; Standish (two); and Sunderland (two); to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of final Report, with Appendix I., of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Science (including the Royal School of Mines), and Questions connected therewith [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Regulation, dated 17th March, 1906, made by the Secretary for Scotland for the measuring and photographing of prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87.]

LOCOMOTIVES ON HIGHWAYS ACT 1896, AND MOTOR-CAR ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Order by the Secretary for Scotland prohibiting motor-car traffic on a highway in the county of Peebles [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WINES IMPORTED.

Return presented, relative thereto, (ordered 28th February; *Sir Edward Clarke*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Soane's Museum, copy of statement of funds of the museum of the late Sir John Soane on 6th January, 1906 [by Act].

COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

Address for "Return showing the countries between which commercial treaties are now in force, and indicating (*a*) the general character of these treaties; (*b*) whether they are with or without tariff agreements; (*c*) whether they are with or without most favoured-nation clauses; (*d*) when the treaties were signed; (*e*) the periods of notice necessary to terminate them."—(*Sir Gilbert Parker.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cost of Shipbuilding at Pembroke Dockyard.

MR. O. C. PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if his attention has been drawn to the fact that, according to the Navy Estimates, the "Duke of Edinburgh," which has just been built at Pembroke Dockyard, is costing, exclusive of armaments, about £48,000 less than the sister ship "Achilles," building by Messrs. Armstrong; about £57,000 less than the sister ship "Cochrane," building by the Fairfield Shipbuilding Company; about £60,000 less than the sister ship "Black Prince," building by the Thames Ironworks, and about £75,000 less than the "Natal," building by Messrs. Vickers Maxim; and whether, in view of this saving to the taxpayers, he will consider the question of allocating to Pembroke Dockyard one of the two new ships not yet placed which are included in the Estimates for 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.* The cost of the "Achilles," "Cochrane," and "Natal" is not directly comparable with that of the "Duke of Edinburgh," as the considerable alteration made in the design of the three former vessels since they were laid down has resulted in an increase over the original Estimate. As there is no sister ship to the "Duke of Edinburgh" building in a Government dockyard, this vessel affords no basis of comparison between the cost of building at Pembroke and at other Government dockyards.

Salaries of London Telegraph Clerks.

MR. GODDARD CLARK (Camberwell, Peckham): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that for a number of years the Civil Service Commissioners issued papers to the competitors for the position of telegraph clerks in London, promising successful candidates a prospect of a salary of £190 per annum, he will state the number of telegraphists in the Central Office, London, who are in the receipt of a salary of £3 2s. per week, and also the number of men who received this promise from the Commissioners who are on a scale of wage covering the prospect of £190 per annum.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As regards the first part of the Question, the matter is in dispute and is engaging my attention; the figures asked for by the hon. Member would be misleading.

Post Office Inspection—Sorter-Tracers Branch.

MR. RADFORD (Islington, E.): To ask the Postmaster General whether, having regard to the fact that he is making a tour of inspection of the various departments of the General Post Office, he will extend it and inspect the work performed by the members of the Sorter-Tracers' and Tracers' Associations who are attached to the Inland and Foreign Telegraph Branches of the Accountant General's Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am, as far as time permits, making a personal inspection of the practical working of various departments of the Post Office in turn.

Repurchase of Stamps by Post Offices.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can say on what grounds a regulation was made forbidding the exchange of stamps for cash by the public at post offices; and whether, seeing that this regulation is inconvenient to a certain section of the community, he will consider the advisability of withdrawing the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The present regulations prohibiting the repurchase of postage stamps from the public over the counter of post offices were made with a view to impose a check on the pilfering of stamps from employers, and on the use of stamps for remittances, a practice which was found to lead to the theft of letters. It was also desirable, on sanitary grounds, to stop the re-issue of repurchased stamps to the public. The regulations are working smoothly, and I see no reason for altering them.

Toll Bars at Middlesborough.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience caused by the toll bars which are maintained at the present time on the main roads to and from Middlesbrough; whether he is aware that on the main road from Middlesbrough to South Bank there are three toll bars within less than a mile of each other, and that there is only one main road from Middlesbrough which is free from toll; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the number of toll bars at present in existence in England, and the conditions of their existence, with a view to promoting legislation giving power to local authorities to take over and maintain the roads and dispense with toll bars without compensation, and to prevent the erection of toll bars in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My attention has been called to the existence of toll bars on roads leading out of Middlesbrough, and I am in communication with the town council of the borough with regard to the matter. I have no information to show that there is need for inquiry as to the number of toll bars in existence in England and the other matter referred to in the last part of the Question, and I could not promise to promote legislation dealing with the subject.

Fatal Accident on board s.s. "Pembie."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any report with regard to the accident in the river, near Old Calabar, which happened on board the s.s. "Pembie," formerly the s.s. "Croxdale," whereby two men were suffocated in the ship's bunkers; whether he is aware that the master proceeded to take the ship to sea instead of stopping the vessel and obtaining assistance from the shore in recovering the bodies of the men from the bunkers; and whether he can say if any proper inquiry has been held into the circumstances relating to the death of the two men; and if not, will he cause inquiry to be made at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade have received very full Reports relating to the accident on board the "Nembe," which I shall have pleasure in showing to the hon. Member if he desires to see them. Unfortunately, the lives of two men were lost. Only a few men could work at a time in the reserve bunker, and, although every effort was made under the superintendence of the chief officer, it was only after three hours strenuous efforts that the bodies of the men were recovered. An inquiry was held by the acting superintendent at Barbados, who reported, after examining six witnesses, that the occurrence could not have been prevented and that no one was to blame. A further inquiry was held by the acting superintendent at Port Talbot, by whom ten other witnesses were examined, who were unanimous that the accident was unavoidable and that everything possible was done to rescue the unfortunate men. The "Nembe" has been carefully examined by the Board of Trade surveyors, who report that there is nothing about the formation of the bunkers to call for any action on their part. The Board are advised that, having regard to the position of the vessel and other circumstances, the master would not have been justified in stopping the vessel.

Mutiny of Crew of s.s. "Epsom."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any Report from His Majesty's Consul at Naples relating to the alleged mutiny of a crew of Chinamen on board the s.s. "Epsom," which is under the management of Messrs. Watts Watts, who have had frequent trouble with Chinese crews; and whether he has received a Report as to the trouble with a Chinese crew on board the s.s. "Heathbank," now the "Wandsworth," under the same management; whether he is aware that the Chinese seamen employed on this vessel claimed their discharge and wages on the ground of a change of ownership, although the solicitors representing Messrs. Watts Watts informed the North Shields magistrates that there had been no change of ownership; whether he is aware that the crew refused to proceed in the ship, and were afterwards arrested at Newcastle on the master's instructions; that when the case was tried before the magistrate, no interpreter was present to explain the men's objections to proceeding in the ship, and that they were ordered to be put on board by the Newcastle City Police; whether he is aware that, on the vessel proceeding down the Tyne, five Chinamen jumped overboard and one man was drowned, the captain making no attempt to rescue the men; whether he is aware that the managers alleged the change of ownership did not affect the men's agreement; and, seeing that a summons taken out against an official of the Seamen's Union, on the alleged ground that he had persuaded the men to desert, was dismissed, whether he will inquire into the disturbances on the s.s. "Epsom" at Naples, and the s.s. "Wandsworth," and say how many Chinese crews Messrs. Watts Watts are employing on board their vessels.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade have not yet received any Report from the Naples Consul with regard to the case of the "Epsom," which is, I am informed, managed as stated by Messrs. Watts, Watts, and Company, but I have called for a Report, and hope to receive it in a few days. With respect to the "Heathbank" or "Wandsworth," the Registrar General of Seamen informs me that she was purchased by the Gracechurch Steamship Company, Limited (Harris and Dixon, managers), in November, 1905, and sold to the Britain Steamship Company, Limited (F. S. Watts, manager), in February, 1906. So far as my information goes, the facts in this case are as stated in the Question, but the owners state that the Chinese left the ship surreptitiously, and the captain had no knowledge of the circumstances at the time. As to whether, under articles of agreement, these men were liable to be transferred to another owner, this was the subject of legal proceedings at Newcastle, and the magistrates directed the men to return to their duty. I believe Messrs. Watts, Watts, and Company, Limited, carry many Chinese seamen, but as to how many I cannot say.

British Trade at Dalny.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has taken any, and what, steps to ensure British traders having equal rights to those at present enjoyed by Japanese traders, who are admitted freely and without any restriction; whether he is aware, or has received, any complaints that the Japanese authorities are imposing duties upon the import of goods other than those of Japanese manufacture into the port of Dalny, although during the Russian occupation no such duties were imposed; and whether he has taken any, and, if so, what steps to prevent the injury to British commerce occasioned by the action of the Japanese authorities; and whether he has made, or will make, representations to the Government of Japan as to the desirability of the evacuation of Chinese territory by the Japanese troops at a date earlier than the full limit of time fixed by the Portsmouth treaty, having regard to the hindrance occasioned by the occupation to the free exchange of commerce between British traders and Chinese merchants.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Sir Edward Grey*): Inquiries have been made, and we are informed that goods, irrespective of nationality, are entering Dalny duty free. The only exception known is a case of 50,000 cigarettes, the property of the British American Tobacco Company, on which duty appears to have been charged. His Majesty's Ambassador at Tokio has been requested by telegraph to inquire why an exception has been made in this case. We cannot ask the Japanese to vary the terms of the treaty with regard to the occupation, but telegraphic instructions were sent on 21st February to His Majesty's Minister at Peking, to cause inquiries to be made on the spot, with a view to seeing that the hindrance to trade was as little as possible, and our hope in this respect has been expressed to the Japanese Government.

Colonial Legislation Vetoed by the Imperial Government.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he will state the occasions since 1870 upon which the Imperial veto has been exercised in respect of colonial measures, specifying date, colony, and subject vetoed; and if he will also state the occasions, if any, upon which this Imperial veto has been sustained or withdrawn.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I think that a large amount of the information desired by the hon. Member will be given in the Return ordered by this House on the 6th instant.† If the hon. Member will indicate the points on which he would like that Return to be supplemented the Secretary of State for the Colonies will consider how far it is possible to meet his wishes.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 267.

Average Yield of Gold per ton of Ore in Australian Colonies.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, will he say what is the production of gold per ton of ore milled in the Australian Colonies, excluding gold won from alluvial washings and dredgings.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The following statement appears to answer the hon. Member's Question:—

	Tons.	Average Yield per Ton.
Victoria - - - -	1,078,433	9 dwt.
New South Wales - -	367,227	10 dwt. 15 grains.
Western Australia - -	2,160,656	1·07 oz.
Queensland - - - -	774,473	1·08 oz.
New Zealand - -	447,969	13·54 dwt.

In Tasmania in 1903 the total gold was 61,826 crude ounces or 59,891 fine ounces, of a value of £254,403; the figures for quartz mining do not appear to be given separately for the years since 1899, when 49,029 tons were treated, yielding 37,402 ounces, an average yield of 15 dwt. 6 grains per ton. In South Australia the production of gold is not large, £90,031 in 1903. The value of the gold per ounce varies in the different States; in 1903 it was as follows: Victoria £3 19s. 3d.; New South Wales, £3 12s. 8d.; Western Australia, £3 12s.; Queensland, £3 1s. 8d.; New Zealand, £3 16s. 5d.; Tasmania, about £3 15s.; South Australia, £3 7s. 6d. In Victoria, for ten years, 1895–1904, the average yield has varied between 9·7 dwt. and 8·4 dwt. In the Transvaal the yield in August, 1899, was 9·599 dwts. fine gold per ton crushed, in June, 1905, the yield was 8·473.

Living-in System—Precautions against Fire.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will take steps to secure from all local authorities the number of persons who have lost their lives through fire, upon premises where they are compelled to sleep in, under the living-in system; and also whether, by Order in Council, he will empower all local authorities to apply the same supervision to premises where shop assistants sleep in that are applied to common lodging-houses.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) As to the first part of the Question, I share the view expressed by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, on the 8th instant,† in reply to a Question on the subject. I do not think it would be practicable to obtain from the local authorities the information desired. As to the second part of the Question, I am not aware of any legal authority for the issue of an Order in Council for the purpose referred to.

Reduction of the Royal Marines.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there has been a reduction of 1,145 in the total force of Royal Marines in the past year; whether further reductions are to follow; and whether these changes, coupled with the fact that specialist marine officers, wearing the uniform of the corps, are no longer to be entered, foreshadow the abolition of the Royal Marine Light Infantry and the Royal Marine Artillery.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 633.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, the reduction being due to the decreased requirements of the Fleet, consequent upon the recent reorganisation. No further reduction will be made during 1906–7. The answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Manufactured Tobacco for the Navy.

MR. F. E. SMITH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty have completed their experiments in manufactured tobacco for the Navy; whether he intends to invite tenders for the supply of such tobacco; and, if so, when.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The supply of manufactured tobacco for the Navy is still in an experimental stage. A further and more extended trial of a blend milder than the ordinary Service tobacco has been arranged for, and when the results of this trial are known the Admiralty will be in a position to decide to what extent there is a desire on the part of the men for the introduction of such a manufactured tobacco, as an alternative to the ordinary Navy tobacco.

Clerical Appointments to the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland has refused to institute competitive examinations in connection with clerical appointments, whilst the Dublin Corporation, the Belfast Corporation, the Great Southern and Western Railway, and other similar bodies have instituted such examinations; whether the manner in which the company uses its powers of patronage has been brought to his knowledge; and whether, seeing that the company derives its monopoly from Parliament, he proposes to take steps to compel it to open the appointments on its clerical staff to competitive examination.

(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No, Sir; I have no information on this subject. The matter is one in which the Board of Trade have no authority to interfere with the discretion of the railway company.

Flooding of the Island of Greenborough.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any information with reference to the partial destruction of the island of Greenborough, in the Medway, by floods; whether the flooding of this island constitutes a danger to the Sheppy isles; and whether he can state what action is being taken in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board of Trade have received no information as to the alleged destruction of the isle of Greenborough. I have been in communication with the clerk to the Medway Conservancy, who informs me that an island 2,000 yards wide and two creeks lie between the island of Greenborough and the isle of Sheppey, so that it is difficult to see how the isle of Sheppey could be in danger by the flooding of Greenborough. I am further informed that breaches in the sea walls along the river side are continually happening and are repaired by the owners of the adjoining lands.

Explosion on the Dearne Valley Railway near Doncaster.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the accident caused by the explosion of a charge of gelignite, on the Dearne Valley Railway, now in course of construction, at Loversall, near Doncaster, which resulted in three men being killed and four others being seriously injured; and whether he will cause a full inquiry into the cause and circumstances of such accident, under the powers conferred upon him by the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The accident in question has been reported to the Board of Trade, and, as it was due to the use of explosives, copies of the notices received have been forwarded to the Home Office for the information of His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives. I propose to leave it to the Secretary of State to determine whether or no an inquiry under the Explosives Acts is necessary.

Removal of Shingle from Foreshore at Fulwell, near Sunderland.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the hon. Member for the Hallam Division of Sheffield, as representing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whether he is aware that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have for some time past granted a licence for the removal of sand and shingle from the Fulwell foreshore, near Sunderland, and that, although the Commissioners have been appealed to by the Corporation of Sunderland and the South Shields Rural Council to determine such licence, on the ground of the damage to adjoining lands and public property by the incursions of the sea consequent upon such removal, the Commissioners have decided to continue to permit such removal, although the corporations in the immediate locality have discontinued it; and whether the Commissioners will reconsider their decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Stuart Wortley.*) Before the representations from the Corporation of Sunderland and the Rural District Council of South Shields were received by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners negotiations had been in progress with the Sunderland Rural District Council, the local authority within whose area the foreshore to which the Question refers is situate, and an agreement had practically been arrived at for a letting of the foreshore by the Commissioners to that district council. In pursuance of that agreement the requisite notice has already been given to revoke the licence under which sand and shingle have been removed from the foreshore during the last year.

The Unfunded Debt.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what is the amount of the unfunded debt of the country under its various heads at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I should be glad if my honourable friend would kindly postpone his Question until the delivery of the Budget statement; as statements relating to the unfunded debt which are issued at different dates are apt to mislead.

Seals in Youghal Bay—Damage to Fisheries.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the damage caused to the salmon fishing industry in the vicinity of Youghal, county Cork, by the numbers of seals which frequent Youghal Bay; and whether steps will be taken with a view to the abatement of the nuisance.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The attention of the Department of Agriculture has been drawn to the damage done by seals to the salmon fisheries in Youghal Bay and harbour. The local Board of Conservators give rewards for the destruction of seals, and about a dozen such rewards have been given during the past few years. The Department will communicate with the conservators with the object of bringing about an abatement of the evil.

Sale of Mr. J. B. Little's Estate at Bawnboy.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what is the present position in regard to the estate of Mr. Joseph Bennet Little, over which Mr. T. F. Berry, Belturbet, is receiver, known as Lisanover Ranch, Bawnboy, county Cavan; have the Estates Comimssioners been approached locally; and when will this large tract be available for distribution.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The estate in question is to be sold in the Land Judges Court. It has been inspected by the Estates Commissioners, who hope shortly to be in a position to make an offer to purchase it.

Amount paid to Local Bodies under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (1) what is the total amount paid to local bodies under Section 58 (4) of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, for the year ended 31st March, 1905; (2) what is the present amount of the accumulated balances under this section; (3) what amount would be required to pay the full amount over 1s. in the £ of railway and harbour charges for the year ended 31st March, 1905; and (4) what amount would be required to pay the full amount over 9d. in the £ for the same purposes for the year ended 31st March, 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) (1) £12,524 19s. 11d. (2) On 31st December, 1905, a sum of £75,320 12s. stood to the credit of the deposit account for licence duties under the section quoted. (3) £9,634 17s. 6d. (4) £15,449 19s. 10d.

Purchase of Land by Mrs. Lambert on the Goodbody Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether Mrs. Lambert, of Castle Ellen, Athenry, has purchased from the Commissioners, in or about fifty acres of untenanted land on the Goodbody estate, Athenry; how much of the said land was under timber; and whether any applications reached the Estates Commissioners applying for a holding on this farm.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that Mrs. Lambert has agreed to purchase from them a portion of this estate comprising eighty-five acres, of which about eighty-one acres are under timber. No application for these particular lands was received from any one except Mrs. Lambert.

Application for Land on the Goodbody Estate.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any representation has been made to the Estates Commissioners by the people of Athenry in respect to the 311 acres of mountain land for which Mrs. Lopdell is negotiating purchase with the Commissioners; and will he say how much of this land is under timber, and were any applications received by the Estate Commissioners for a portion of this land from small holders and people living in the vicinity.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that all applications for land on the Goodbody estate were duly considered when the estate was being dealt with. Eleven acres out of the lot which Mrs. Lopdell is purchasing consist of land under timber. No application for this particular lot was received by the Estates Commissioners.

Suggested Fish Curing Station at Arklow.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will draw the attention of the Department of Agriculture to the desirability of establishing a fish-curing station at Arklow.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Department of Agriculture will inquire into this matter, but, having regard to the great facilities for the fresh fish trade which exists at Arklow, it is doubtful whether curing operations would be profitable.

Drainage of Lough Neagh—Sir A. Binnie's Report.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what action he proposes to take on Sir A. Binnie's Report *re* the drainage of Lough Neagh and the Bann.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Report will be considered by the Government as soon as practicable. I am not yet in a position to state what action will be taken upon it.

Purchase of the Dunne Estate, Aughaboe, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what is the result of the negotiations for purchase which the Estates Commissioners have been conducting with the Land Judges' Court relative to the Dunne estate, Aughaboe, Queen's County.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The negotiations have not yet been concluded.

Intimidation of the Gaelic Football Club at Markethill, County Armagh.

MR. McKILLOP (Armagh. S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the posting of threatening notices in the town of Markethill, county Armagh, directed against the local Gaelic Football Club, its members and supporters, and also to the fact that on various dates, from November, 1905, up to the beginning of the present month, their grounds have been trespassed on, goal posts removed, and the ground itself strewn with broken glass, rendering it useless, and that up to the present date those responsible for these actions have not been brought to justice; and whether he will take immediate steps to put an end to such incidents.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that, some months ago, a Gaelic football club, numbering about twenty persons, was established at Mullaghbrack, near Markethill. The first match played by the club took place on Sunday, the 25th February, and great objection to the playing of the match on a Sunday was taken by the residents of the locality, who are almost exclusively Protestant. On the 3rd March the football ground was found to be thickly strewn with broken glass, and a threatening notice, directed against the promoters of the club, was found upon a tree in the vicinity. No complaints as to trespass upon the field have been made to the police. The goal posts were removed by a member of the club for safety. The police have used every exertion to trace the offenders in this matter, but, so far, unsuccessfully. They are taking all possible measures to preserve the peace.

Sunday Football at Markethill, County Armagh.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a Gaelic football club at Markethill, county Armagh, persistently play football and hurley on Sundays in a field close to the parish church of Mullaback, county Armagh, a district which is almost exclusively Protestant; and whether steps will be taken to put a stop to such proceedings.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to the Reply which I have now given to the Question of the hon. Member for South Armagh.† The football field in question is 300 yards from Mullaghbrack parish church. Football matches were played in this field on Sundays, 25th February, 4th and 11th March. The police have no power to interfere in this matter, but they will use every effort to preserve the peace.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Navy League.

MR. KING (Cheshire, Knutsford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that a lecture was recently given to a school for girls in St. Andrews by Lieutenant Knox, of the Navy League, and that after the lecture a number of schoolgirls were enrolled members of the Navy League; and whether this proceeding has the sanction of the Admiralty.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): Lieutenant Knox is not now in His Majesty's service, and the whole proceedings are outside the jurisdiction of the Admiralty.

Cadet Nominations to Osborne.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether nominations to Osborne are awarded to candidates, subject to their passing qualifying examinations, absolutely on the result of the interview and the written Reports, or whether the results are liable to be influenced by other considerations.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answer to the first Question is in the affirmative.

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† See preceding Question and Reply.

The 16th Lancers.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will order some inquiry to be made as to the cause of the amount of crime in the 16th Lancers during the twelve months ending February 28th last, seeing that during that period seventy-five courts martial were held in the regiment, besides 300 other regimental entries having been awarded in addition; and if he will give the result of that inquiry.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I do not think this is a matter which calls for a special inquiry, but as the hon. Member has raised the question, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Command has been requested to furnish a Report. This Report will be confidential.

MR. LEA: May I ask the right hon. Gentlemen whether he does not think that this amount of punishment points to the fact that there is an enormous amount of crime in the regiment, and that either there is the finest collection of bad characters in the 16th Lancers or else that there is something radically wrong with the system?

MR. HALDANE: I will consider the matter when I get the information.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): Will the right hon. Gentlemen consider the facts that a large number of these men joined the regiment in South Africa during the later stages of the war, that the regiment has lately returned home after fourteen years' service abroad with hardly any non-commissioned officers, and that many of the men have had no experience of life in English towns?

MR. HALDANE: I will take all that into consideration.

Jamaican Tariffs.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that the existing import tariff of Jamaica expires on June 1st, 1906, he will suggest to the Governor of that Colony that it is desirable to encourage inter-Colonial free trade among the British West Indian Possessions, and that this opportunity might therefore be taken of bringing the new Jamaican tariff, so far as the necessities of revenue permit, into uniformity with the lower scale of customs duties already prevailing in the Colony of Trinidad.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State would view with favour any measures tending to the establishment of inter-Colonial free trade in the British West Indies, though the possibilites of such trade are necessarily limited by the similarity of their products; he is also in favour of the establishment of uniform tariffs in the different Colonies, and of the reduction of customs duties wherever possible; but as these duties are imposed solely for revenue purposes, the possibility of effecting reductions depends upon the financial position. Jamaica has very recently abolished the surtax of 6 per cent. upon the customs tariff which was imposed last year.

Native Labour in South Africa—Deficiency.

Mr. GUY BARING (Winchester): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has any official information alleging that there is a deficiency of native labour both for agricultural purposes and railway construction throughout South Africa; and whether he will lay Papers upon the Table.

MR. CHURCHILL: Information as to the deficiency of native labour is contained in the last Blue-book. A statement by Lord Selborne may be referred to at page 64 of Cd. 2819. To what extent the supply is capable of increase cannot be definitely anticipated, but it appears that in April last there was a larger supply of native labour in the Transvaal than at any previous period. It has since decreased to some extent.

Colonial Contributions to the Imperial Institute.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table a Statement showing separately amounts contributed to the Imperial

Institute out of the Revenues of the self-supporting Colonies, and the Dependencies and Protectorates under the charge of the Colonial Office; and showing under what heads, or for what purpose, such contributions have in each case been allotted.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The list would take a long time to read, and I think I shall be consulting the convenience of the House and of the hon. Member if I lay it in the form of a Return upon the Table of the House.

Illegal Flogging of Chinese Coolies.

Sir J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will make inquiry as to the approximate number of Chinese coolies in the gold mines of the Transvaal who have been illegally flogged, under the sanction given by Lord Milner when High Commissioner; whether that sanction conferred a licence to flog on certain specified mine managers only, or on mine managers generally; and whether he can state the manner in which the terms of the sanction were communicated to the mine managers.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am making inquiry as to the numbers involved. Lord Selborne informed Mr. Lyttelton in November last that he found it extremely difficult to ascertain when and to whom sanction for slight corporal punishment was given by Mr. Evans; that it appeared that sanction was verbally given to Major Bagot of the Labour Importation Agency and certain other individuals, but that there were no written records in the Chamber of Mines Labour Importation Agency or Foreign Labour Department; that the first authority seems to have been given in respect to a quarrel by coolies at Geduld Mine in August or September, 1904, and from time to time to certain individuals but always verbally.

Transvaal Taxation Returns.

Mr. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what have been the total annual receipts of the revenue of the Transvaal from taxation on gold and diamond mines during the last four years.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The mining revenue of the Transvaal was as follows:—The financial year is from June to June.

	£
1902–1903	506,718
1903–1904	720,758
1904–1905	759,535
1905–1906 (half-year)	367,352

Of this last sum £75,000 was from diamond mines. Another sum of £75,000 from diamond mines was received by the Government during the half year and reserved for redemption of loans.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Does that amount include the sum accruing from the Premier Diamond Company?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir. May I add that I have directed that in future a copy of the Answer shall always be supplied to the hon. Member who asks a Question.

India's Contribution to the Imperial Institute.

Mr. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the total amount to date contributed to the Imperial Institute out of Indian Revenues; and if he will state for what purposes it has been allotted.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. John Ellis, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): The total sum expended from Indian Revenues to date for the Imperial Institute is £24,077. Of this £9,731 went for the general purposes of the Institute, £1,450 to scientific research into Indian products, and £12,896 for salaries and maintenance charges of galleries and collections of the Indian section. A further £666 or thereabouts has been spent by the Indian Government in India for raw material collections sent to the Institute. £3,300 has also been spent in India on raw product collections, some of which have been transferred to the Institute. A saving of £400 per annum has been effected at the Indian Office in consequence of the establishment of the Indian section at the Imperial Institute.

India Office and the Imperial Institute.

MR. LAIDLAW: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a decision has been arrived at on the subject of the financial arrangements between the India Office and the Imperial Institute; whether he will state the terms of the revised arrangements; and whether he will grant a Return of all correspondence between the India Office, the Government of India, and the Imperial Institute on the subject of the Indian contribution.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: It has been decided to continue for another year the financial arrangements sanctioned for the quinquennial period ending 31st March, 1906; and I am in correspondence with the Government of India as to the revision of these arrangements. Correspondence regarding the Indian contribution was presented to Parliament in 1896, and subsequent correspondence on the subject has been included in the annual Reports on the Indian section, which are also presented. Pending a decision as to a revision of the present arrangements, I do not think it would be convenient to publish further Papers.

Indian Officials and Directorships of Companies.

SIR J. JARDINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether members of the Council of India are allowed, after appointment, to accept directorships in public companies; and whether subordinate officials at the India Office are allowed to do the same.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Members of the Council of India stand upon a footing totally different from that of ordinary members of the Civil Service; they cannot be removed from office except upon an Address from both Houses of Parliament; and no person has over them the control implied by the terms of the Question. As regards members of the establishment of the Secretary of State for India, they are subject, in respect of the acceptance of directorships to the same rules and restrictions as the rest of the Civil Service in this country; that is to say, they are not allowed to accept any such post if it would require their attendance at any time between the hours of ten a.m. and six p.m.

Life Saving Apparatus in Mines.

MR. T. RICHARDS (Monmouthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has taken any steps to ascertain the extent to which the apparatus used by the German workmen at the Courrières collieries, France, have proved successful in exploration and rescue work after the explosion.

The following Questions also appeared on the Paper:—

MR. LEA: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the advent at Courrières, in France, where the recent colliery disaster took place, of a life-saving corps of Westphalian colliers equipped with the oxygen-breathing apparatus with which all German collieries are provided; and will he say whether collieries in Great Britain are provided with this life-saving system in case of explosions taking place; and, if not, what steps does he propose to take to see that these methods of life-saving are made compulsory.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the organisation of the Westphalian Miners Salvage Corps, with a view to ascertain whether some similar system to cope with mining disasters is applicable to the requirements of British coalfields.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The question of the provision of life-saving apparatus, and generally of facilitating the work of rescue in the case of accidents in mines, has engaged the attention of the Department for some time, and I have decided to include it among the subjects to be referred to the Royal Commission on mining which will shortly be appointed. The experience of the German rescue corps at Courrières will, no doubt, afford valuable information, and I am taking steps to obtain a Report on this and other points connected with the disaster.

Welsh Collieries—Inspection by Workmen.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for West

Monmouthshire I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether His Majesty's chief inspector of mines for the South Wales district has sent him any Report upon the action of the manager of the Ocean Colliery Company's western pit, and the manager of the North's Navigation Colliery Company's Wyndham pit, in refusing permission to the workmen to inspect the collieries, as provided for by general Rule 38 of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887; and if he will issue instructions to these managers to allow the inspection to take place at once.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have received a Report from the inspector of mines on the matter, from which I gather that the difficulties have arisen in consequence of the appointment as examiners under general Rule 38 of men employed at other collieries. In the case of the Wyndham pit, the manager, I understand, acknowledges the right of the men to make such an appointment, but asks for some proof, by a reference or otherwise, that the strangers who are brought on to the mine premises to examine the mine are "practical working miners" as required by the Act. This seems to me not unreasonable. In the other case the colliery company demur to the appointment of strangers at all. It is clear, however, that the men employed at the colliery have the right under the Act to make such an appointment, and I am instructing the inspector to inform the company that in the event of such an appointment being made by the men employed at the colliery, the facilities required by the Act must be given.

Mr. BRACE: Will care be taken that practical working miners are appointed?

Mr. GLADSTONE asked for notice of any further Questions.

Essex Quarter Sessions—Case of W. H. Cheesewright.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that William Henry Cheesewright was committed for trial to the Essex Quarter Sessions on April 4th, as an incorrigible rogue and vagabond, and that the Bench directed him to be kept to hard labour in the interval; and will he say under what statute the Bench has powers to direct prisoners on remand to be put to hard labour.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member has been misinformed. William Henry Cheesewright has not been committed for trial—he was convicted by the magistrate of being an incorrigible rogue, and committed to Quarter Sessions not for trial, but for sentence. He was ordered while waiting sentence to be kept to hard labour. This is the ordinary procedure for dealing with incorrigible rogues under Sections 5 and 10 of the Vagrancy Act.

Dangerous Exhibitions by Women.

Mr. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a case tried before Mr. Justice Darling on the 13th instant; and if he will consider the advisability of issuing regulations prohibiting performances in public that may entail danger to the lives or limbs of the performers.

Mr. THOMPSON (Somersetshire, E.): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Stamirowski *v.* Barber, tried on 13th March before Mr. Justice Darling and a common jury; whether the police have power to prevent such dangerous exhibitions; and, if not, whether he will bring in a Bill to extend the Children's Dangerous Performances Acts, 1874 and 1897, to adults.

Mr. GLADSTONE: My attention has been called to the case referred to, but as it appears that the performer was over eighteen years of age (the present statutory limit for women taking part in such performances) the police could not interfere. I regret to say that I have no power to issue regulations prohibiting performances such as this, but I will consider whether it is desirable to extend the provisions of the Dangerous Performances Acts 1879 and 1897 to dangerous performances by women of any age.

London Cabmen's Complaints against the Police.

Mr. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to complaints of London cabmen that they are harassed by certain constables of the Metropolitan Police, and that in these cases the constables have continually summoned the cabmen; and whether he will issue a Return showing the average number of summonses from the City Police with regard to cabmen, as compared with those for which the Metropolitan Police are responsible.

MR. GLADSTONE: I find, on inquiry, that certain verbal complaints have been made to the Commissioner of Police with regard to one district, and that he has investigated these complaints and finds they are not well founded. The constables do not summon cabmen, but report to their superintendents, who have to obtain the Commissioner's sanction before summoning. Drivers are seldom summoned for a first offence unless it is of a serious character. The circumstances of the City and the Metropolitan Police are so diverse that I do not think any useful purpose would be served by the Return suggested.

Infringements of the Hackney Carriage Regulations.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in the case of complaints in reference to Hackney carriages, a record is kept of each constable appearing in support of a summons for which he is responsible, and the result of such summons.

MR. GLADSTONE: The reports made to the Commissioner show the names of the officers who report offences and the results of the proceedings if any are taken; but there is no special record of the names of officers who report offences against the Hackney Carriage Acts.

Employment of Children Act.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state which are the local authorities who have made by-laws under the Employment of Children Act; in which cases do the by-laws so made prohibit street trading by girls under sixteen; in which cases have by-laws, prohibiting such trading, been proposed and failed to secure Home Office sanction; and what is the proportion of local authorities who have taken action to those who have not taken action.

MR. GLADSTONE: Seventy-four local authorities, out of a total of 329 have submitted by-laws under this Act, usually in draft. Forty-four sets have been actually confirmed; seven others provisionally approved; one, the London set, has been made the subject of a formal inquiry; four, recently submitted, are under the consideration of the Home Office; one has been withdrawn, and the remainder are waiting for replies from the local authorities to the Home Office inquiries. I can give my hon. friend the names, if he desires them, privately. Of the fifty-one sets confirmed or provisionally approved, twenty-one entirely prohibit street trading by girls under sixteen, subject to the usual proviso for girls assisting their parents. In other cases, local authorities have fixed a lower age, or prohibited employment at certain specified places, such as the entrances of theatres, railway stations, and the like, in others a system of licensing only has been adopted. In no case has the Home Office yet refused to sanction such prohibitions.

Courrières Colliery Disaster.

MR. BRACE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in view of the collieries explosion at the Courrières collieries, France, he will arrange with the French Government, or otherwise, for a British mining expert or experts to make an investigation, and report whether the whole, or how many of the Courrières collieries, were worked through to adjoining pits, and had a connecting road with each other; if the Courrières collieries had connecting roads with each other, to what extent, in their opinion, had that system of working contributed to the disaster; and, in view of the fact that a number of collieries in the United Kingdom are worked through to adjoining pits, and have connecting roads between pit and pit, what precautionary measures, if any, they would, as a result of their investigation, recommend.

MR. GLADSTONE: The question raised by my hon. friend is a very important one. I am in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject and I will let him know the result without delay.

The Aliens Act.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is any truth in the report which has been current during the last few days that certain Russians who were sent back from this country were shot when they got back to Russia.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no confirmation of that at all.

Drainage and Sewer Rates.

MR. BROOKE (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the charges upon local rates, consequent upon the decisions of the Law Courts in reference to combined drainage and sewers; and whether he proposes to introduce legislation to relieve ratepayers of the burdens arising from such decisions.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My attention has been called to this subject. It is one of considerable difficulty, and I am not in a position to make any promise with regard to legislation upon it this session.

Insanitary Houses at Bromley.

MR. BROOKE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the insanitary condition of the property between Bow Road and High Street, Bromley, E.; and whether, in view of the fact that the London County Council is seeking powers to erect an electric car shed adjoining Bow Road, he will confer with the London County Council as to the propriety of their selecting this site and dealing with it under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware of the circumstances relating to the property referred to. I have communicated with the County Council, and I am informed that they have considered the question of using some portion of this property for the erection of a car shed, but they have come to the conclusion that the site would be unsuitable for the purpose.

Poor Law Relief Administration in Poplar.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will consider the advisability of holding in public the inquiry into the administration of relief in Poplar, so that the evidence may be sifted in the public interest; and whether he proposes to carry on these investigations through officials who have already expressed opinions on the matter, or will some independent person be sent down.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have received an application from the guardians of the Poplar Union for a public inquiry, and I have replied that I think this proposal should stand over for the present. The investigation at Poplar is being conducted by Mr. Davy, the Chief General Inspector of the Local Government Board, in whose impartiality I have entire confidence. He will receive the help of any other officers of the Department whose services may be necessary. The guardians have already intimated their willingness to render him assistance.

MR. CROOKS: Mr. Davy has already expressed opinions on the work of the guardians. Is he a proper person to conduct an investigation of this character?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Lots of persons have made *ex parte* statements on this particular subject.

MR. CROOKS: They are not public officials. It is a different thing altogether.

Lambeth Farm Colony.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will receive the deputation from the Lambeth Board of Guardians with regard to his statement that the land for the purchase of which the guardians have sought the sanction of the Local Government Board, in order to establish a farm colony, is sour land which land agents and others have attempted to palm off on innocent town boards of guardians.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have not had any application from the Lambeth Board of Guardians to receive a deputation with regard to the statement referred to.

They have, however, asked the Local Government Board to receive a Deputation to confer with the Board on the question of providing further accommodation for the indoor poor of the parish, and I am in communication with them on the subject.

National Vaccine Establishment—Lymph Supply.

*Sir W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state what are the original sources of the lymph supplied from the National Vaccine Establishment; and whether any of the lymph supplied from that establishment has been derived directly or indirectly from the artificial inoculation of calves with human small pox.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: The lymph supplied from the National Vaccine Establishment is in all cases derived direct from the calf, has been passed through a series of calves, and is in no instance directly derived from the artificial inoculation of calves with human smallpox. The usual method of renewing lymph for supply from the establishment is by vaccinating calves with vaccine lymph obtained from children, but it cannot be stated that this is always so.

*Sir W. J. COLLINS: Does that Answer apply to all lymphs used?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: As far as my knowledge goes, yes.

Halfpenny Post Regulations.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the halfpenny post regulations which apply to receipts do not provide for the same if the receipt contains any other written matter, such as soliciting the favour of further orders; will he say if these regulations are universally observed; and, if not, will he have this restriction removed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The regulations of the Halfpenny Packet Post (which are given at page 11 of the Post Office Guide) allow formulas of a conventional character in general use in commercial transactions to be written on receipts, provided that they are expressed in not more than five words. A phrase such as that to which the hon Member refers, if limited as required by the regulations, would be allowed under this rule to be written on a receipt.

Return of Postal Telegraph and Telephone Offices.

Mr. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will grant a Return of the Post offices, telegraph offices, and public telephone call offices, which are situated on licensed premises in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales respectively.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I will give instructions for the Return to be prepared. This will take some little time.

Coast Erosion

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the destruction caused to the coast and the townships of the East Riding of Yorkshire by the recent high tides and gales, and to the fact that the village of Kilnsea has been practically devastated by the sea; and whether His Majesty's Government can see their way to give some assistance towards repairing the damage done.

* The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Kearley, Devonport): The Board of Trade have received information of the flooding of the lowlands at Kilnsea and Easington during the recent gales and exceptionally high tides —the highest for very many years. From this it appears that the sea washed over the tops of the embankments on both the seaward and riverward sides. From the reports made to the Board by the local inspector in charge of the groynes and other sea defences of Spurn Point, no fresh breach has been made in the embankments. A breach in the banks to the south of Kilnsea Beacon was made on September 30th last. The landowners concerned and the Commissioners of Sewers then intimated to the Board of Trade that the lands, which would be consequently flooded at Spring and high tides, were not worth the cost of protection. In 1903 the Government offered to contribute £400 towards the construction of a bank which the Commissioners

of Sewers proposed at that time to make, as it was considered that this proposed bank would assist in protecting the road to the Spurn Point works and Coast Guard station. The landowners and the Commissioners of Sewers have, so far, not proceeded with these defence works; consequently the offer has not been accepted, but it still holds good. The hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware that the entire question of coast protection is about to be considered by a Royal Commission.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Does the right hon. Gentleman realise that this is a question of the utmost urgency, and that unless the Government takes some action immediately, the village of Kilnsea, with 1,200 acres of land, must inevitably disappear into the sea?

*MR. KEARLEY: I am aware that the matter is of extreme urgency. The Government offered £400 towards the embankment, and the offer was not accepted. I am certain, however, that the Royal Commission will deal with the question.

British Interests in Argentine Railways.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the capital invested in railways in the Argentine Republic, owned exclusively, or almost exclusively, by British shareholders (the companies being registered, and having their head offices in England, and their directors resident in London), amounts to about 120 millions sterling; whether he is aware that large quantities of railway material and stores have recently been ordered, and are being ordered, for extensions and renewals by the various railway companies; and whether he can state if any, and what quantities of this material are being purchased and manufactured in countries other than Great Britain.

MR. KEARLEY: I am aware that the capital invested in Argentine railways amounts to about the sum stated, and that the railway companies are largely British. Also that extensive orders are being given by the companies for the supply of stores and materials here and elsewhere; but I am unable to state what quantities are being purchased or manufactured in foreign countries.

MR. HOUSTON: Will the hon. Gentleman make it his business to find out?

MR. KEARLEY: I will inquire as far as I can.

German Bounties on Locomotives.

MR. HOUSTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the bounty or bonus paid to German manufacturers by the German Government on locomotives made in Germany for exportation to foreign countries; and what sum it would represent on a locomotive of eighty tons weight.

MR. KEARLEY: In answer to this and a Question addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by the hon. Member,† I may say that certain information has reached the Foreign Office to the effect stated, but that on inquiry at Berlin we are assured that no bounty is given by the German Government on the export of locomotives.

MR. HOUSTON: My information is to the contrary.

Accidents on the District Railway.

MR. T. DAVIES (Fulham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawn to the number of accidents which have occurred on the District Railway since its electrification; and whether, in view of the number of hours which the men have to work, and the want of a second man in the motorman's cab, he will take steps to insure the safety of the public who travel on that railway.

MR. KEARLEY: I am aware that a certain number of accidents have occurred to trains on the Metropolitan District

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† MR. HOUSTON: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his Department has received a Report from the English Consul at Rome giving information as to inquiries which the Italian Government were making in various countries for a number of locomotives, the conditions under which the various manufacturers were tendering, and the assistance which the German Government was giving to German makers to enable them to compete with English makers; and if he will state what that assistance is.

Railway since its equipment for electrical working. The responsibility for the safe working of the line rests with the railway company, and I am communicating with them as to the frequency of these breakdowns. No complaint has been received by the Board of Trade from any of the men employed on the railway as to the hours of work. I am advised that there is no reason to suppose that the employment of one man only in the motor cab of a train is a source of danger, or that any accident which has happened would have been avoided by the presence of a second man.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that these men cannot make complaints with regard to hours because they have split turns ?

MR. KEARLEY: The men have only to make their complaint to the Board of Trade and an investigation will follow. The men have not complained, and the Board are not in a position therefore to make an inquiry.

Cost of Feeding Poor Children in London Schools.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on medical inspection and feeding of children attending public elementary schools, which shows that the cost of food alone for a child's meal varies from 1d. to 2d., he can say what would be the annual cost of providing one meal per day for all children attending public elementary schools in the administrative county of London, and to what rate on London property this sum would be equivalent.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The cost of the food for giving a meal to every child in public elementary schools in London on every occasion when the school is open would be, at 1d. per child, about £596,000, which is equivalent to the rate of 3½d. in the pound; if the food cost 2d. per head, the figures will be £1,192,000, equivalent to a 7d. rate. These figures take no account of the heavy expenditure on the provision and serving of the meals, including, not improbably, special buildings. Of this expenditure I can give no estimate.

Hay Crops in Lancashire and Westmoreland.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the estimated average yield, per acre, of hay from permanent grass, in the north-western counties of Lancaster and Westmoreland, is more than double that of some other English counties, and 50 per cent. above the average yield of all English counties; whether the crop is estimated in the same manner and the aftermath excluded in all cases; and, if so, whether the higher yield in the north-western districts is due to a different system of farming or heavier rainfall.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland) (for Sir Edward Strachey): The average yield per acre of hay in Lancashire and Westmoreland is, as my hon. friend points out, very much heavier than in other parts of the country, and we are advised that this is mainly due to a larger and more equable rainfall. It is probable, however, that the comparative absence of stiff clays and poor sands in the north-western counties and the configuration of the surface of the country are also contributory causes. The estimates of crops are collected on the same system all over Great Britain, and the estimators are expressly instructed to take second crops of hay into account.

Irish Cattle Imports.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether there are any restrictions against the entry into Ireland from Great Britain of live cattle, as store cattle, and as pure-bred cattle for breeding purposes; if so, what is the nature of these restrictions; and whether there are any corresponding restrictions against the introduction from Ireland of live cattle for either of these purposes into the inland markets of Great Britain.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (for Sir Edward Strachey): The importation of cattle from Great Britain into Ireland is governed by the Importation of Animals (Ireland) Order of 1900, which provides that cattle cannot be landed in Ireland except with the consent of the Irish Department of Agriculture and subject to such conditions as they may prescribe. There are no restrictions on the importation of cattle from Ireland into Great Britain.

Cattle Exports to Argentina.

Mr. CROMBIE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in recent years, a large number of our best breeding cattle are being exported to Argentina and other countries competing with us in the meat trade; whether the cattle so exported have passed a tuberculine test before leaving this country; and whether those that have failed to pass this test and been rejected are permitted to be disposed of for purposes of breeding and slaughter at home.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (for Sir Edward Strachey): There is a considerable export trade in breeding cattle from this country to Argentina, but the cattle are not required to pass the tuberculine test before leaving these shores. The regulations of the Argentine Government require that all imported cattle should be tested with tuberculine at the conclusion of a period of forty days quarantine after landing, and that any animals giving a diagnostic reaction shall be slaughtered. Under no circumstances can cattle exported to Argentina be brought back to this country.

Cavan Pig Exports.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will state why the quarantine on pigs exported from Cavan, the chief pig-rearing county in Ireland, to Scotland should be continued, there being no disease existing in Cavan; and, in view of the loss to the farmers of the county consequent upon this quarantine, will he, if there be any doubt about the existence of disease, direct that a declaration by the farmer selling and the dealer buying, that there is no existing disease, be accepted in lieu of quarantine, and thus protect this industry.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (for Sir Edward Strachey): In view of the fact that there are no restrictions on the movement of swine from one part of Ireland to another, it is necessary to treat the country as a whole, and we cannot grant preferential treatment to any particular county. The regulations governing the importation of swine into Great Britain have, however, recently been modified so as to admit of the introduction of store pigs under certain conditions, and they are now practically identical with those which regulate the movement of swine from one district to another in this country. My hon. friend regrets that he is unable to promise any further relaxation under existing conditions.

Cornish Mackerel Fishery—Suggested Close Time.

Mr. CORY (Cornwall, St. Ives): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will consider the possibility of ordering a close time of Saturday and Sunday nights in the mackerel fishery in Cornwall, to relieve the glut caused by the fishing of the East Coast men on those nights, when they fish the West of England mackerel fishery, contrary to the practice of the Cornish fisherman and in opposition to public feeling, and contrary to what the East Coast fishermen do when they fish in other parts of the British Isles.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (for Sir Edward Strachey): The difficulty to which my hon. friend refers is one which has on several occasions been brought under our notice, and my hon. friend should be glad to confer personally with him respecting it. We have, however, no power to adopt the particular suggestion which he makes as to the prescription of a close time for the week-end.

Mr. CORY: Will the Government or the Board of Agriculture constitute a Fishery Board for Cornwall with power to make by-laws?

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: No doubt that is one of the subjects on which my hon. friend would confer with the hon. Member.

Firth of Clyde Herring Fishery.

Mr. LAMONT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the Fishery Board for Scotland expect to conclude their investigations into the causes of the failure, for the last three years, of the herring fishery in the Firth of Clyde; and whether a Report will be issued embodying the resulting recommendations, if any.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): The herring fishing in 1903 was above the average. No special report is contemplated. The investigations in regard to the migration of herrings in the Clyde area are being conducted by the scientific department of the Fishery Board, and a report of their work is included in the Annual Report.

Scottish Fishermen's House Agreements.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the conditions under which numbers of fishermen's houses are held, the fishermen having themselves built the dwellings and being liable to be evicted without compensation; and whether there is any prospect of this subject being dealt with in the forthcoming Land Bill for Scotland.

Mr. SINCLAIR: My attention has not been called to the matter referred to by the hon. Member, but I shall be prepared to consider any representations that may be made to me.

Motor Car Service for Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say in what position the proposed motor car service in the rural districts of Ireland now is; and whether he will say if this scheme can be carried out, in view of the use which might be made of it to bring fish and other products to market.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): I presume the hon. Member refers to a scheme for motor-car services in Ireland which was proposed some three years ago by Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie. His Majesty's present Government have had no part in the matter, but it may be desirable that I should state briefly, for the information of the House, what appears to have taken place while the late Government were in office. I gather that the late Government gave their cordial support to the scheme, and did everything in their power to bring about co-operation between the promoters and the county councils in giving effect to the scheme. The promoters provisionally selected seventeen routes for motor car services, and these were surveyed at the instance of the Government. It was a condition of the original scheme that the roads should be put into a state to bear the heavy motor traffic, the combined weight of motor and trailer being 5½ tons. The county councils generally, while approving of the experimental service, declined to incur the expenditure necessary for putting the roads into proper condition, though the Local Government Board expressed its willingness to make loans for the purpose. I am informed that Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie eventually announced that they would give the county councils a year to consider what could be done, but intimated that the scheme must be dealt with as a whole, and that they were not prepared to set it on foot in those localities only in which its prospects of success were least favourable. It is a matter of regret to find that the year allowed for consideration has passed, and that nothing further appears to have been done by the county councils. His Majesty's present Government would gladly do everything that might be possible to further the philanthropic scheme proposed by these gentlemen if its revival should in any way be brought about; but the question of re-opening negotiations with Lord Iveagh and Mr. Pirrie is obviously one for the county councils to consider.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): When this scheme was first started, was any condition as to improving the roads attached to it?

Mr. BRYCE: I take it that as soon as the scheme took a tangible form, it was found necessary to ask county councils to put the roads in a proper condition.

Lord Westmeath's Galway Estates.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners will inquire before sanctioning the purchase price agreed on, between Lord Westmeath and his county Galway tenants, into the circumstances which led to the existing litigation between the landlord and sub-agent Moran; whether the amount claimed by the landlord in the writ against Moran is alleged to represent rent collected by Moran from the tenants; if so, will care be taken to prevent what Lord Westmeath treats as collected arrears, in one proceeding, from being included in the purchase bargain with the tenants; and whether the rent receipts given to the tenants in recent years will be examined by the Commissioners, and the tenants brought up before the Commissioners to ascertain the circumstances in which they were given.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them, and that they have, therefore, no knowledge of the facts alleged in the Question. If the estate should come before the Commissioners, they will make due inquiries, in accordance with the Act and with the Regulations made thereunder.

Lisard Estate, County Galway.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that it is the desire of the small tenants at Kilconnell, county Galway, that the Congested Districts Board should hand over the Lisard estate to the Estates Commissioners in order that it may be divided amongst them; and whether he will instruct the Congested Districts Board to do so.

MR. BRYCE: A Resolution to the effect stated in the Question has been received by the Congested Districts Board. The Lisard estate, which is not situate in a congested district, was purchased by the Board for the benefit of congested districts in county Galway. The Resolution in question will be considered by the Board at their next meeting; but in the meantime I may refer the hon. Member to my reply to the Question of the hon. Member for North Roscommon on Monday last†, in which the powers and policy of the Board in regard to the disposal of lands purchased for the purposes of migration are fully stated.

Marquess of Clanricarde and the United Irish League.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of the Marquess of Clanricarde in instituting eviction proceedings against Mr. Martin Ward, merchant, of Loughrea, for the recovery of his business house and premises, because he acts as secretary of the Loughrea branch of the United League; and whether, in the interest of the peace and good order of the district, he will introduce legislation this year with a view of putting a stop to proceedings of this kind.

MR. BRYCE: It is, I understand, the fact that eviction proceedings against Mr. Ward are pending at the suit of the Marquess of Clanricarde. Men's motives are matter for conjecture, and I cannot undertake to state what they were in this case; nor can I make any statement as to possible legislation on the subject of town tenancies.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): On the question of motive, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Lord Clanricarde's agent wrote a letter, which has been published, in which he gives as a reason for the eviction of this gentleman the fact that he is secretary to the local branch of the United Irish League.

MR. BRYCE: I have not heard that.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will send the right hon. Gentleman a copy of the letter.

Goodbody Estate, Galway—Case of Christopher Kennedy.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 882.

Ireland whether he is aware that an evicted tenant named Christopher Kennedy, with three sons, aged respectively twenty-seven, twenty-four, and twenty, applied for a holding on the Goodbody estate; and whether, seeing that Kennedy was in possession of his old home for over forty years, until dispossessed by the Agricultural Board, in order to take up possession, the Commissioners will give immediate consideration to Kennedy's application for a holding before it is all distributed amongst the large land proprietors in the neigbourhood.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that Kennedy was not a tenant on the Goodbody estate, but was employed on the estate as a herd. The question of providing Kennedy with a certain portion of the land which would be suitable for his present business of a butcher is at present under the consideration of the Department of Agriculture and the Estates Commissioners.

Athenry Agricultural Farm—Purchases of Machinery.

Mr. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Board of Agriculture in Ireland is responsible for the purchasing of foreign machinery for use on the agricultural farm near Athenry; and whether, seeing that similar pieces of machinery can be purchased from people who manufacture the same class of material at home, he will take steps, price and quality being equal, to see that encouragement is given to home-manufactured goods.

Mr. BRYCE: The instructions issued by the Department of Agriculture to the superintendent of their agricultural station at Athenry are to obtain quotations for machinery of Irish manufacture, and, price and quality being equal, to purchase the same in preference to goods manufactured elsewhere. As, however, the station serves as an educational establishment, the superintendent is at the same time instructed to avoid a sameness in the type of implements used, and to procure specimens of new types of machinery or implements designed for special purposes. Several of the implements used on the Athenry farm were bought by the Department with the estate.

Irish Courthouses—Clare County Council Resolution.

Mr. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he received a resolution from the Clare County Council calling on the Government to have the management of the various courthouses in the county vested in the county council, who are responsible for their rent and repairs, and find it difficult to deal with them in the absence of any control; and will he say what action he will take in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: I have received the Resolution referred to. Legislation would be necessary to effect the change suggested, and the matter would require to be very carefully considered. I am not at present prepared to make any statement on the subject.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of introducing legislation, in view of the hardship inflicted on the county council, by making them pay for the courthouses while giving them no control over them.

Mr. BRYCE: I will consider it, but I must not be taken to give any promise.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: If I bring in a Bill, will the Government give me facilities for it?

[No Answer was returned.]

Donemana Protestant Flute Band.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at Donemana, North Tyrone, on Saturday night, March 10th, the Protestant Flute Band, while on parade, were attacked by Nationalists, who threw stones and other missiles at the bandsmen, and what steps are being taken by the police to put a stop to mob interference with peaceably disposed people and the destruction of property in this district.

Mr. BRYCE: The police are doing everything which may be possible to preserve the peace at Donemana, where, unfortunately, Party feeling has recently become excited. The information which

I have received does not agree with the allegations in the Question, but as proceedings are being taken against certain persons in connection with the disturbance of the 10th inst., it is better not to make any statement while the matter is *sub judice*.

Longworth Oatfield Newcastle Estate, Galway.

Mr. JOHN ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a petition from the tenants in the neighbourhood of the Longworth Oatfield Newcastle estate, in the county of Galway, requesting that the Land purchased by the Congested Districts Board should be divided amongst those of them who at present live upon uneconomic holdings; and whether their request will be granted with as little delay as possible.

Mr. BRYCE: The petition in question has been received by the Congested Districts Board, and will be considered by them at their next meeting.

Shooting Outrage at Gurteenreery, County Tipperary.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the result of the Constabulary inquiries into the statements of Thomas Pratt and his wife that they were fired at twice at Gurteenreery, Kilcooley, county Tipperary, on the 17th Februrary; have Pratt and his man, William O'Keeffe, firearms in the shape of revolvers and guns; could the marks on the walls of the old dwelling-house have been caused by shots fired at Pratt or his man; and, having regard to the peaceable state of the district and the doubtful character of this alleged outrage, will he order that these men be deprived immediately of the firearms which they possess.

Mr. BRYCE: The circumstances of the alleged firing at Mr. and Mrs. Pratt will be stated in my reply to the next Question. The local police are of opinion that the case was a genuine one and not bogus. Mr. Pratt possesses a gun and a revolver, for both of which he is duly licensed under the Peace Preservation Act; but, so far as the police are aware, O'Keeffe has no firearms. On the day after the alleged firing, the police examined Pratt's gun and formed the decided opinion that it had not been fired for a considerable time. In these circumstances, no sufficient reason for the revocation of Pratt's arms licence appears to exist.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain the circumstances under which an evicted tenant named Philip M'Donnell, from near Kilcooley, county Tipperary, was arrested on February 18th and committed to Clonmel gaol; is he aware that he was subsequently brought up on remand, after spending eight days in prison, before Mr. Turner, R.M., at Clonmel petty sessions, and that Mr. Turner refused the remand, on the ground that no evidence was produced to sustain the charge then entered against him of having fired two shots at Thomas and Mary Ellen Pratt; that, notwithstanding the refusal of the remand and his consequent release from custody, he was immediately re-arrested and brought back to Killenaule under arrest, and that depositions were then taken from Pratt and his wife, who are there in possession of the farm from which M'Donnell was evicted; and whether, seeing that the case was finally brought before two magistrates, Mr. R. Hemphill and Mr. R. Ashby, at Killenaule, and dismissed on the grounds that there was not a particle of evidence to support it, he propose to take any steps to compensate M'Donnell for the imprisonment suffered by him and the annoyance he was put to.

Mr. BRYCE: Mr. and Mrs. Pratt reported to the police that at 7.30 on the evening of February 17th two gun shots were fired at them as they were crossing the yard of their residence, but they both escaped injury. The police on examining the place found that several pellets of shot had struck a wall and a cart in the yard. On February 19th, Philip M'Donnell was arrested upon suspicion, and was remanded in custody for a week. M'Donnell is the son of a tenant who, twenty-four years ago, was evicted from the farm which Pratt now holds. The police had not completed their investigation of the case by the expiration of the remand, and they therefore applied for a further remand, but this was refused by the magistrates, upon the ground that no evidence to justify it had been produced. The police thereupon re-arrested the accused, and on the following day Mr. and Mrs. Pratt gave sworn evidence that they had been fired at, and the accused was further remanded in custody for a week. Upon the expiration of this remand, the accused was discharged, the police having failed to obtain evidence incriminating him in the offence. The Inspector-General is of opinion that the local police ought not to have re-arrested the accused in the circumstances stated, and he has so informed them, but he is satisfied that they acted in good faith. I regret that I have no power to give compensation to a person arrested on suspicion in such a case.

Adulteration of Foods and Drugs.

Mr. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether seeing that the Sale of Food and and Drugs Act only defines in general terms what constitutes adulteration, the Government will consider the advisability of appointing a permanent board of reference, to which appeals may be made for guidance and authoritative advice touching the permissible composition, and the definition and the brands which should be used in the sale of food and drinks.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): The establishment of a board of reference that would be empowered to prescribe standards of the quality and purity of food has been more than once suggested, and, I may add, that some authority of the sort appears to me to be indispensable, if the intentions of Parliament with respect to the administration of the laws affecting adulteration are to be rendered effectual. I am advised, however, that legislation would be necessary for the purpose, and the Government see no prospect of introducing such legislation during the present session.

Land Conveyance in Scotland.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a Resolution of the Town Council of Alva urging upon the Government to appoint a Commission to institute a careful and exhaustive investigation into the present system of conveying land in Scotland, the registration of writs affecting the same, and the complaints as to delay and expense which it occasions; and whether he will be prepared to appoint such a Commission.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A number of representations, including that mentioned by my hon. friend, have been received, and the subject is now under the consideration of the Government, but I cannot as yet make any announcement as to the conclusions at which they have arrived.

American Subsidy Bill.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): On behalf of the hon. Member for Darlington, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government have considered the probable effect which the Subsidy Bill, now before the American House of Representatives, will have on the shipping and ship-building industry of this country; and whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any steps in regard to it.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: His Majesty's Government are not able to say what will probably be the effect of the Subsidy Bill, in the event of its becoming law. If the Bill passes, its consequences will, of course, be carefully watched. The Government do not see that any useful action could be taken by them in the matter.

Colonial Conference.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government that the Colonial Conference, to be held next year, will be given a free hand in the consideration of all matters of Imperial interest, fiscal or otherwise.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, it will be open to the Conference to discuss any matter of Imperial interest.

Mr. LONSDALE: Would the right hon. Gentleman consider fiscal arrangements a matter of Imperial interest

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It depends on what is included in the term fiscal arrangements.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say at what date the Conference will assemble?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. Notice should be given of that Question.

Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government, in accordance with the usage prevailing up to the year 1895, to introduce a Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill, especially in view of the long period that has elapsed since such a measure was passed into Law.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Answer is in the affirmative.

Germany and the Welsh Coalfields.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have any information of the conclusion of negotiations for the purchase of two anthracite collieries in Wales by a German syndicate; and whether they propose to take steps to prevent the alienation of the sources of supply of a commodity essential to our naval supremacy.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. The Government have no information of the kind at their disposal. A similar Question was addressed to the late Prime Minister on more than one occasion towards the close of last session, and I can only repeat what he said on August 1st, namely, that we have no reason to believe that there is a German Syndicate in treaty for any area at all of the steam coal which is used by the Navy. With respect to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, the Admiralty are satisfied that there is no necessity for taking any steps in the matter, and in that view the Government entirely concur.

MEMBERS AND THEIR SEATS.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) called the attention of the Speaker to what he described as a daily breach of the rules of the House. He pointed out that the rules provided that a Member by placing his hat on a seat, or a card provided for the purpose, and subsequently remaining within the precincts of the House, acquired the right to that seat for the sitting. Every day Members secured a seat and then went away and did not return until prayers. He wished to know whether such conduct was not a breach of the rules of the House, and whether it came under Rule 161 and was punishable by the Speaker as "grossly disorderly conduct."

*MR. SPEAKER: It is, or ought to be by this time, the well known rule that Members who take seats before prayer time ought not to leave the House, but should remain within the precincts. I cannot say that as at present advised I should be prepared to put in force the rule mentioned by the hon. Member. I feel sure that when it is thoroughly understood that there should be an honourable understanding to that effect, hon. Members will be prepared to carry out the spirit as well as the letter of the rule.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) asked the intentions of the Government with regard to the suspension of the Twelve o'Clock Rule. In the event of the Army Estimates debate being continued till a later hour, was it proposed to take Vote 8 and Vote 10 of the Navy after twelve o'clock? He thought it would be very objectionable.

SIR. H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We do not propose to take any Navy Votes to-night other than on Report.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Michael Meagher, esquire, junior, for the County of Kilkenny (North Kilkenny Division).

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating to the arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [Lords.]

NEW BILLS.

HOUSE-LETTING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

To reform the system of House-letting in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cross; supported by Mr. Findlay, Mr. Robert Duncan, Mr. Watt, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Murray Macdonald, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Younger, and Mr. Munro Ferguson; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 107.]

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

"To amend the law relating to the Rating of Hereditaments containing Machinery," presented by Mr. Bright; supported by Mr. Barran, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Gill, Sir William Hornby, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Haworth, and Mr. Alfred Scott; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th May, and to be printed. [Bill 108.]

ALKALI, &c., WORKS BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Alkali, &c., Works Regulation Acts, 1881 and 1892," presented by Mr. John Burns; supported by Mr. Runciman; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 109.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House).—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) said that when Vote A was about to be given on Thursday there was an understanding between himself and the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Croydon, that, as there were many members of the Committee who wished to speak, they should be at liberty to discuss Army matters generally upon Vote 1, but they could only do that with the Chairman's permission. They should have obtained that permission, however, before the Vote was put. The Chairman would remember that the right hon. Gentleman and himself wished to raise the point, but it was too late. He (Mr. Haldane) therefore asked him now, on behalf of those Members who wished to speak, whether they might be at liberty to discuss matters generally on Vote 1, and not be debarred by a misunderstanding for which he was really to blame owing to a want of knowledge of technical practice. It would be a great convenience to the Committee generally, and would be carrying out the distinct understanding between himself and the right hon. Gentlemen, if the Chairman permitted that discussion of Army matters generally.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The ordinary rule is that when a continuation of the general discussion i desired on some other Vote, an arrangement for such continuation must be made during the discussion of Vote A, the consent of the Chairman not being withheld. On this occasion that has not been done. The right hon. Gentleman now informs me that the fact of its not having been done was due to a misunderstanding. Under those circumstances, I do not think I can take the responsibility of refusing a general discussion on Vote 1, but I do wish to point out that this is an important rule and must be observed as far as possible in the future. It is only because of this serious misunderstanding affecting both sides of the House that on this occasion I allow the general discussion to go on.

MR. HALDANE said he took it that there would be no desire to discuss the whole matter over again on the report stage of Vote A.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) concurred.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) hoped he might claim the indulgence of the Committee if he made a few observations of a general nature on this Vote, in view of the fact that it was now three years since he last troubled the House with any remarks on Army questions. Although he was by no means an old Member, he had had the fortune to hear three successive Secretaries of State for War make their *debuts*, and on each occasion he seemed to remember that their introductory statements were received with a measure of generous acclamation from most parts of the House, praise which was not always repeated in subsequent stages of discussion. Therefore, if he might add his insignificant tribute to the many which the right hon. Gentleman had received on his statement, he should like to do so with a certain amount of caution, and to congratulate him for perhaps somewhat different reasons to those hitherto advanced. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of the lengthy statement—it was not too lengthy—which he had made to the House, had said many wise things, but had told them very little. In this respect he had shown a remarkable restraint, even self-denial, if he might say so, for it must have been a severe strain upon any Secretary of State for War not to submit to an expectant House a complete panacea for all the ills that military flesh was heir to. The gist of the right hon. Gentleman's statement was "Leave me free." Personally, he did not raise any objection to that course. Hitherto, he understood that Secretaries of State for War had been considered fair game, but this was the first instance that he knew of on record in which the game had been able to name the close time which it should enjoy during the approaching season. The right hon. Gentleman had by his wisdom secured for himself a reasonably close time during the present session. In approaching the question of Army reform, he had wisely determined to apply this touchstone to all questions of military organisation, and indeed to all existing arrangements—whether they were directly conducive to the fighting efficiency of the Army. He did not, however, add the natural complement to that which was used in the case of the Naval service, viz., not only fighting efficiency, but instant readiness for war. That was the touchstone which had been applied in the case of the Naval service during the last few years with remarkable success, and there was no doubt it had been highly conducive to economy, which they all knew was now the question of the hour. The right hon. Gentleman had shown them that he had already made a beginning in the matter of economy, but he must draw attention to the very remarkable statement or claim put forward by the Prime Minister in the course of the debate the other night, when he claimed that the right hon. Gentleman had succeeded in reducing the Estimates of his predecessors by some £1,750,000. That was a very surprising statement; and he believed his right hon. friend the late Secretary of State for War absolutely repudiated it. It had, however, been used in the Liberal Press during the last few days, and it was used by a member of the Government speaking in the country on Saturday night. He would therefore like to put to the right hon. Gentleman this direct question: Did he claim that he had actually reduced the Estimates of the late Government by £1,750,000?

MR. HALDANE: No, Sir. Those Estimates were merely draft Estimates, as the right hon. Gentleman says. They were what may be called the military requirements put forward in the office, and I take it the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon and the late

Chancellor of the Exchequer would have reviewed them. I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman himself would have reduced them.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said he thought the right hon. Gentleman's statement showed that the Prime Minister was under a complete misapprehension when he made that claim to the House on Thursday night.

MR. HALDANE: The Prime Minister made a statement only in reference to military requirements.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the Prime Minister went further than that, but the right hon. Gentleman had given a categorical denial, and he thought that was all that was necessary. The aspect of economy which animated the whole Committee expresssed itself the other night in an arbitrary attempt to reduce the Army by 10,000 men, an attempt very properly resisted by the right hon. Gentleman, because it seemed to him (the speaker) that before they could decide whether or not they could dispense with a certain number of men a little clear thinking, of which the right hon. Gentleman was such a distinguished exponent, had to be applied. They had first of all to arrive at the basic element of the problem, which was: What was the purpose for which the British Army was maintained? That was an inquiry which had often been put by the House in recent years, and had never been satisfactorily answered. An attempt was made some years ago by Mr. Edward Stanhope in a celebrated Memorandum to define the objects of the British Army, and he could not help thinking that the time had now arrived when the right hon. Gentleman or the Committee of Defence, should bring out a revised or up-to-date edition of the Stanhope Memorandum. He was fortified in that expression of opinion by certain weighty remarks made by the Prime Minister himself when Leader of the Opposition last session. He spoke in the strongest possible terms on the point. He said—

> "The right hon. Gentleman has however, after all, not contributed out of the wealth of his knowledge and argument to the point we all wish to be informed about—what are the military necessities of the country? How many men do we require? . . . What is the good of the Secretary of State for War telling us his views, which he has done with great force and fulness, with regard to the regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers? We have never heard what the view of the Cabinet was, and we are invited to form our opinions and to vote money and do all the other part of our duty without having the fundamental notion of what the wisest and highest authority in the country declares should be the number of men required for the defence of the country and its oversea obligations."

He was anxious to emphasise the non-party character of these discussions, and would therefore press upon the right hon. Gentleman not his own demand, but the demand put so forcibly by his own Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman's basic theory was an absolute acceptance of the extreme blue-water school. He was a member of the blue-water school himself, but he was not sure that he was able to accept its extreme conclusions quite as readily, he almost said as joyously, as the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have done. He preferred that there should be some kind of prudent insurance against the extreme risk or the hundred to one chance of a fatal accident. The right hon. Gentleman had told them, and he thought all of the blue-water school would agree, that invasion on a large scale, as long as the Navy was adequately maintained, was impossible. He went further, however, and said a raid was impossible. There was, he should say, a good deal of divergence of expert opinion on this point, and he could not help thinking that the question of a raid required a little more examination before it was finally dismissed, because in a matter of this description they had to consider not only probabilities but possibilities. The vital point of the right hon. Gentleman's whole argument, as indeed it was of the whole position of the blue-water school, was that the whole theory was fatal unless the Navy was invincible. It was not merely a question of the arithmetical proportion between the Navies of this country and any two countries as expressed in the two-Power standard, because the Empire could not stake its existence on the efficacy of arithmetic. If we should be engaged in a European war, it was more than probable that we should have to face two or more Powers at one time, because probably no less a combination would think of attempting such a venture. Therefore the only justification of the extreme blue-water theory was that our Navy must be maintained invincible, and the question was could we count on that maintenance? The air at present was full of talk of retrenchment, reduction of armaments, even disarmament. Of course, if disarmament could be carried out in mathematical proportion between the various Powers concerned, well and good, but what tribunal could there be which could in the first place determine the proportion, and, in the second place, enforce it? Let them take a practical example. Let them take the case of a possible continental enemy, a large military Power. They might agree to a reduction in the interests of peace of 100,000 men in their Army. In the first place that would be a purely illusory reduction, because it could be almost instantly replaced in a conscript country, and in any case the residual strength would be ample to overwhelm our relatively insignificant forces. In any case we could not reply to that advance by reducing our Army by 100,000 men; we should have to reply in kind, and what would probably be considered the naval equivalent? Possibly a squadron of battleships, according to whatever index number was adopted by the Hague or other Peace Conference. Such a reduction on our part would take years to replace, and it would probably just tip the balance of invincibility against us and lay us open to that fatal blow at the heart from which recovery would be impossible. Therefore he trusted we should not take a sentimental lead in the pious aspiration towards a reduction of armaments, leading up to universal peace, although he thought we should take every opportunity of responding to any actual and reasonable advances which were made by other Powers whose position in the matter was not quite so vital. We had not only a "blue-water" school to consider, but also a "milk-and-water" school, which had received a good deal of re-inforcement during the last few months. They had all read a remarkable speech by Mr. Courtney a few days ago. It would not have been so important if it had not been taken up by the Liberal Press and received an immense amount of support from hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. There was no doubt that that feeling existed, and he was all the more thankful that the right hon. Gentleman himself belonged to the "blue-water" school, and that so long as he was in office he was not likely to consent to any disarmament or reduction of armaments which would in the least imperil our invincibility upon the sea. The right hon. Gentleman had naturally dwelt, on the various occasions on which he had spoken, upon the financial aspect of the question. He had shown his practical desire to make reductions wherever possible, and he had shown with unanswerable logic that the only way to make substantial reductions was by reducing the number of men. He (the Speaker) confessed he was not able to follow all the right hon. Gentleman's conclusions upon that point. It seemed to him that the case of India was especially puzzling. The right hon. Gentleman gave them to understand that one of the substantial reductions that might be made was in the British Army in India. Where did the economy come in? The British Army in India was paid for by the Indian Government. It was true, of course, that a certain expense came upon us, but it did not come upon us from maintaining that force in India, but because we had chosen to find drafts for the force in India by a most expensive, extravagant, and inefficient method. They must not apply the question of efficiency only to the drafts; they had to consider the state of the Army at home as well, and that had been seriously injured by the system of supplying drafts through the linked battalion system, which the hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had most effectually demolished in debate, though unfortunately not in practice. The Indian Government, so far as the strength of the Indian force was concerned, paid the piper, and he therefore presumed that it was entitled to call the tune. It was not only the Russian problem they had to consider, but also the question of British prestige in connection with a handful of white men among 300,000,000 of natives of India, and they could not altogether ignore the lessons of 1857. It had also to be remembered that whilst the Army at home had been recently increased, the Army of India had remained practically at the same figure for the last fifteen years. There did not, therefore, seem the same necessity for making any attempt to reduce the force there. The economic question, however, was the one which primarily concerned the Committee. The Indian Army was expensive to us only in so far as we insisted on maintaining the system of linked battalions. The right hon. Gentleman the other day quoted in support of his defence of the linked battalion system certain authoritative opinions put forward by Lord Roberts and Sir Evelyn Wood, who had expressed the opinion that the recruits produced under the linked battalion system were superior to those produced under the depôt system. That was a matter in which he believed even the experts were by no means agreed. If, however, there was doubt as to whether the recruits produced by the linked battalion system were the better of the two, there was no doubt whatever as to which of the two systems was the more economical. He himself extracted information from the War Office some three or four years ago, which went to show that the cost of the recruit under the linked battalion system was five times that of the recruit under the marine depôts system. He did not think they could afford to be extravagant in these matters, and he was quite certain that, even if the recruit under the linked battalion system was slightly better at first, in three months after he arrived in India his superiority would be absolutely indistinguishable. He could not believe that the right hon. Gentleman could not, with the expert advice at his back, produce some alternative to this vicious and costly system of supplying recruits for foreign service. The right hon. Gentleman referred to a number of minor economies which he either proposed to introduce, or had introduced, during the course of his short term of office. On the majority of them he (Mr. Lee) had no criticisms to make, although there were two small points he felt bound to refer to in justice to the late Board of Admiralty. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman had suggested that the late Board of Admiralty wished to maintain a garrison and forts at St. Helena for the purpose of defending 5,000 tons of coal. He presumed that was meant as a jest. It was not the object at all; the object was the very reasonable one of having defences there for the purpose of denying the use of the anchorage of St. Helena to any enemy's cruisers which might use the place as a coaling rendezvous. That was a very different and a very substantial reason. The other point was with reference to Wei-hai-Wei. Various jokes had been made with regard to Wei-hai-Wei as a watering place. It was really not a joke. If the hon. Gentlemen who laughed had had the experience of spending three summer seasons at China as he had done they would know that the health of the men, not only of the Army but of the Navy, was of the utmost importance, and that there was no other place except Wei-hai-Wei which was suitable for the establishment of a sanatorium for the Fleet, and for the hospital which had now been erected for the benefit of the men of the Fleet.

MR. HALDANE: I did not object to Wei-hai-Wei being retained as a British possession; but we did object to, and what we have got rid of, was the maintenance of a Chinese Regiment at Wei-hai-Wei, which cost £20,000 a year.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the right hon. Gentleman must remember that that regiment was exceedingly useful at the time of the relief of the Pekin Legations, and it might be again wanted in the case of an outbreak in China. There was one economy which the right hon. Gentleman had taken a considerable pride in, but to which he took most serious objection. The right hon. Gentleman had said he had either stopped or reduced to a large extent the military reconnaissance of possible theatres of war in these islands. How much money would be saved in this way? It must be an exceedingly small sum. He himself had been engaged in carrying out military reconnaisances on a large scale and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that they could be carried out at a very much cheaper cost than the right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine. That was only one of the small and obvious precautions which should be taken against the 100 to one chance of invasion. It was quite certain that these reconnaissances had been made by foreign experts. The right hon. Gentleman referred with some humour to the futility of surveying the defences of Birmingham. Birmingham, it might be said, was very well able to take care of itself. It was possible to improvise earthworks, rifle-men, and scouts, but we could not improvise knowledge of the ground.

It was only that superior knowledge of the ground which would enable amateur riflemen to make a stand against trained and organised troops. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not forget what had happened in Natal and the loss we had suffered there for want of a knowledge of the country. All that was needed was a small number of staff officers to study the strategic and tactical features of the ground. He knew that was a thing which could be easily done in time of peace, but the lack of it might easily lead to disaster in time of war. The last point he wished to make, and, perhaps, it was the most serious of all, was in regard to the shortage of recruits. During the last few years the pay of the British soldier had been greatly improved, as well as his conditions of service. Why, then, this falling off in the number of recruits? Many reasons had been advanced, but there was one which had not been advanced, nor even suggested. It was that the Army had been made unpopular. There had been a conspiracy in the Press, in Parliament, and in society to discredit and ridicule the Army. There was a popular idea abroad that we had no Army to speak of and that what we had was inefficient. The truth was that our Army was considerably stronger than it was before the opening of the Boer War, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had admitted to the House that the Army was never so efficient as it was to-day. He was exceedingly glad that the right hon. Gentleman had publicly repudiated the most unfortunate, and altogether inexplicable, statement made by Lord Roberts which had gained such wide currency. The evil, however, had been done. The Army had been sneered at and laughed at; and both officers and men were tired of being "humbugged about." A few years ago the Army was a popular idol; to-day it was a popular butt—at any rate with certain classes. The cloud under which it had been resting naturally affected those high-spirited young men who looked upon the Army as a glorious profession in which they could engage and enjoy a life of adventure while at the same time doing service to their country. This was the class of men who had been deterred from entering the Army. We had been getting, he admitted another class who had been driven by hunger, or want of work, to enlist; but these were poor substitutes for the other classes who had been discouraged. Let the right hon. Gentleman, the Government, and the Press encourage the Army. Let them let it alone. That was what the Army really wanted for a time and then it would soon be restored, not only to popular favour, but to that confidence in itself which was of far more importance than anything else at the present time. The recruiting problem would then solve itself, because the conditions of service were excellent, though of course, not incapable of improvement, and the pay sufficient. In conclusion, he would earnestly beg the right hon. Gentleman to consider the points he had raised, and to recognise that they came from one who had the best reason for being interested in the welfare of the Army, and who had the greatest possible admiration for the fresh, broad-minded, and non-Party attitude in which the right hon. Gentleman had approached this great national problem.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) hoped he would not be charged in any way with indulging in a controversial spirit if he took some slight notice of one or two of the observations of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had said that one reason why the Army was unpopular at the present moment, and why recruits were not coming in, was that the Army had been "humbugged about." That was only a re-echo of what he himself had been saying during almost all the time the late Government remained in office. It was during that period that the Army was "humbugged about," and successive Secretaries of State for War would not let it alone. He did not wish to rake up slumbering or dead ashes; but it should be recognised how those difficulties arose When this subject came up for discussion earlier in the session, he ventured to point out to the Committee some of the difficulties connected with enlistment. Take the cavalry alone. Last year the cavalry was subjected to no less than three different systems. At the beginning of 1905 the period was three years with the Colours, and nine with the Reserve. A little later it was eight years with the Colours and four with the Reserve. At the present moment, it was seven years with the Colours and five with the Reserve. That was one of the reasons why young men would not enlist; they did not know from day to day, from week to week, or from month to month, for what term either they or their comrades were being enlisted. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would introduce a consistent policy, in regard to the distribution and numbers of the Army, and that the actual terms of enlistment would be laid down on a permanent footing. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean and he had been at loggerheads in this House on the subject of linked battalions. He ventured to think that the case for linked battalions had never been fully stated in Parliament since the days of Mr. Cardwell. "Linked battalions" was quite an erroneous term; it should be in reality the "double battalion system." That system was the outcome of the Cardwell territorial system and the short service system. Without these it never would have existed at all. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted the fact that the Esher Commission recommended its abolition. That was so; but many other recommendations of the same Commission had also not been adopted, while some that had been adopted had not been justified by events. The case for the double-battalion system rested partly on administrative convenience and economy, and it was also more convenient for the despatch of drafts to the battalions abroad. There was another reason which was entirely overlooked by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down when he argued against it. At all events the hon. Gentleman had not informed the Committee of the fact that the infantry soldier was not enlisted for general service, but for a particular regiment; the consequence was that he could not be transferred, when he came up for reserve service in rejoining the Colours, to serve in any other regiment than that for which he was enlisted. The result was that if war broke out, and if the linked battalion, either in the Colonies or in India, was at its full strength there was no need for recruits or reserves. If the linked battalion system were done away with, there would be hundreds of thousands of men at home whom it would not even be possible to bring together in any military organisation, but who would be felt stranded at the depots where they could be of no service to the country at all. If, on the other hand, they had, as they had at present, this linked battalion system, what did they do with their recruit? He was at once sent, instead of to a depot, to the linked battalion at home and helped to bring up that battalion to its full strength. Then the linked battalion at home, unlike the depot, could be despatched to the scene of action as a military unit. That was the case for the linked battalion as it presented itself to Mr. Cardwell's mind, and as he thought it presented itself to the mind of the present Secretary of State for War. Although it was unquestionable whether depots by themselves when created would be slightly less costly than the linked battalion, there was not, as far as he knew, a single military officer of experience who could be found in public to adopt the course proposed by his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean and those who thought with him. On the other side there was overwhelming evidence—Commission after Commission, Committee after Committee, Report after Report—to substantiate and uphold the present system. He would not give more than one or two points in illustration of what he had said. There was, for instance, a Report by Lord Wolseley, and he noticed that nowadays Lord Wolseley's name was never quoted in this House as a military authority, and yet he was known in his day—which perhaps had rather passed—as the foremost military reformer, and to no man in this country was a greater debt of gratitude due for breaking up the obsolete system which had prevailed at the War Office. Lord Wolseley said—

> "Our internal military history for the past twenty-five years has in every way demonstrated the wisdom of those, who, in 1870, maintained that this principle is the keystone of the arch supporting the military organisation then introduced."

The keystone then referred to was the linked battalion system. Then there was the opinion of Sir Evelyn Wood, than whom there had been no more distinguished soldier in this country. His opinion was dead against that expressed by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. Sir

Evelyn Wood was, he thought, the first man who produced at Aldershot any military system worthy of the name, and who made Aldershot a real training ground for the Army. His system was that training was not to be received between intervals of pleasure but as the essence of military life. Sir Evelyn Wood's opinion was as explicit and as clear as it could be that to the linked battalion system we owed the military organisation and stability of the Empire. Many other authorities could be quoted, but in the face of the two great ones he had cited those opposed to the linked battalion system could not produce a single one. No one who had looked at the Recruiting Report could be altogether satisfied with it. A great many advantages were introduced into the Army during the time of Mr. Brodrick, and one great advantage was the introduction of characters. Too much stress could of course be laid on that point, but it had reduced the troubles of the district and general courts-martial to an extraordinary extent. It had reduced the "ins and outs" in the different regiments to a great extent: that was the men who enlisted, then deserted and enlisted elsewhere. But nobody could look at the figures of the men going in and the men coming out without alarm. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon put the difference of the figures at 18,000. There had been an exodus from the Army not only on account of the three years men, but on account of the eight years men, who, having served with the Colours, had gone off through the system of bounties or the prolongation of their service in India in consequence of the late war.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) said that in common with right hon. and hon. Gentlemen in all parts of the House he listened to the speech of the Secretary of State for War with the greatest possible pleasure, especially to that part dealing with the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman was the first Minister of modern times who had recognised the great part which the Militia ought to occupy with regard to our defence, and also the part it had played long ago in the defence of our coaling stations in times of war. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he hoped the Militia would not be used as a Militia Reserve; that they should be trained under their own officers and kept to their own functions and not be "bled white" by being made the subject of drafts for other service. That was, to his mind, the most admirable exposition of the duty of the Militia that he had ever heard. He could tell from his own personal experience an incident showing how absolutely destructive of the Militia was the policy of "bleeding white." A few months after the outbreak of the South African War a Militia battalion to which he belonged was embodied and reported at Aldershot. They came up about 700 strong in the rank and file, but within three months of their embodiment 250 of their best men, in fact their only good men, were drafted off to the line battalions in South Africa. They were then left with 450 men, of which fully two-thirds were middle aged men, who had lost the use of their legs, and the others were young men of seventeen or eighteen years of age who had not learned how to use theirs. They had an excellent band, an efficient body of officers, and a very good staff, but, for all practical purposes, they were useless to protect this country in case of a raid, and it would have been better if the Government had disbanded them, saved the cost, and spent the money in another direction. If the right hon. Gentleman would carry out his policy in regard to the Militia, he would receive the grateful thanks of everyone interested in that old historic force. As to recruiting, there was no difficulty with the Cavalry, or the Artillery, or the Guards, but the difficulty arose in regard to the regiments of the line. Although the position of recruits had been improved in respect of pay, allowances, and barrack accommodation, there was one thing in connection with the soldier which he never heard mentioned, which had some effect upon recruiting, and that was the question of uniform. Napoleon I. was supposed to know a good deal about soldiers and about human nature, and in his reign the uniforms in the French Army were rich to an extreme degree.

He was not advocating that the working dress of the British soldier should be made more attractive, but he thought the dress which he wore at church parade or upon ceremonial occasions and when he went home should be increased in attractiveness, and he would almost say in richness. Hon. Members must remember that a boy enlisted when he was seventeen, and promises of pension or of increased pay were not so attractive as a rich uniform and the love of adventure which all felt at that age. He suggested the appointment of a small Committee to go into this question, and, as the matter affected not only the recruit but his female relations, he thought it would be an advantage if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to appoint some ladies on that Committee. The right hon. Gentleman might even enlist the sympathies or services of some of the ladies who beseiged the bedroom door of the Prime Minister some days ago. He wished to refer to the question of the number of units that should be kept in India for the defence of the country against foreign invasion. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have rather an open mind upon the subject of whether 80,000 men was not too large a garrison to keep in India, and he noticed other hon. Members were taking the same line, for the reason that, owing to the recent war between Russia and Japan, we need not fear for a long time any aggression on the North-West Frontier on the part of Russia. It seemed to him that the result of the war would make us far more open to an attempt on the part of Russia to take India, for the reason that a great Empire like Russia was bound to expand unless she contracted. If she was prevented from expanding to the east she would only attempt to expand in the south-west, and we should be unwise to think of reducing the garrisons of India.

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he desired to associate himself with the congratulations which had been showered on the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War from all sides of the House. He accepted the French proverb that there was no such thing as a little economy. In dealing with public money every economy was a great economy, and therefore he welcomed the course the right hon. Gentleman was taking in looking into these matters and would, if he had the opportunity, give the right hon. Gentleman information which had come to him (Mr. Cox) which showed how thousands of pounds were being wasted. What they were concerned with now, however, was not thousands but millions. The country wanted to get back to the military standard which Lord Salisbury found sufficient for so long. As the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had pointed out in regard to Army Estimates, we had to look not at what was paid by this country alone, but also at what was paid by India and the Colonies. The real problem of the Army was the problem of the defence of India. How did that work out financially? India and this country together maintained an Army costing £50,000,000 a year for the defence of the North-West frontier against Russia, whilst the cost of the Russian Army, which had to guard half a dozen frontiers, cost only £40,000,000. That would seem to be one serious reason for considering whether there should not be a reduction in the Army expenditure not only here but in India, and he was glad to hear the hint thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman that there was a possibility of reducing the Indian garrisons. In this regard he read with great pleasure last autumn a letter written by the late Secretary of State for War to an hon. Gentleman on the opposite side of the House, in which that right hon. Gentleman said that India would not run any immediate risk if her garrison was reduced to the point to which it was reduced during the time of the South African War. During the South African war at a time of great anxiety the Indian garrison was reduced, and if it could be reduced then it could be reduced now. It was then cut down to 63,000 men, but the late Secretary of State at the same time sanctioned the payment of bonus of £15 per annum in order to retain men in the service whose term had expired. The number of men in the Indian garrison was now 78,000, and that number of men had only been maintained by the payment of this bonus. If we were bound to the linked battalion system we were doubly bound to consider whether we were not maintaining more than a sufficient garrison to guard against t danger to which India was exposed. The reason put forward for that garrison was always the same. It was always the Russian bogey. But they had the statement of the late Prime Minister that the question of the invasion of India by Russia was not so much a question of men as of transport; that she could not invade India until she had built a railway through Afghanistan. At present the Russian railway terminated 400 miles from the North-West frontier of India, and the intervening region contained some of the most difficult mountainous country in the world, and such a railway could not be built for at least ten years. In order to send 100,000 men into India Russia would require 1,000,000 men to guard her lines of communication. By all means let us prepare for danger, but let us not prepare now for a danger which could not overtake us for ten years. With the command of the sea we could put our forces into the field on the North-West frontier of India quite as quickly as, if not more quickly than, Russia could get her troops there and at much less cost. We were justified in ignoring this danger also, because we had made a treaty with Japan which, while it reduced our difficulties by half, doubled those of Russia. Japan would attack her on the Manchurian Frontier and we should attack her in Afghanistan and also wherever we could get at her in Europe, and therefore the danger from Russia was so remote that we were wasting our resourses in preparing for it. There was a real danger at the present time that we might find the Indian Government pressing for a larger number of men for the reason that Lord Kitchener, in order to prepare for this danger of ten years hence, was withdrawing garrisons from India to place them on the frontier. He himself would guard against that danger by refusing such a request on the ground that troops were not at present wanted to guard against any external danger, and so far as any internal danger was concerned there was no necessity for a garrison of the present size. From his own personal experience he knew that the vast majority of the inhabitants of India were the gentlest and most easily governed people in the world, and if the Government of India, with its enormous resources of native troops and native police, wanted a garrison of 78,000 men to keep down such a population as that, in his opinion it amounted to a confession that they were governing them badly. The reduction of the Indian garrison would give immediate relief to both the Indian and the British taxpayer, because such a reduction in India must mean a corresponding reduction of the forces at home. The majority of this House were pledged to economy and they knew that that pledge could not be carried out unless there was a large reduction on the accounts for the Army. There were many other ways in which the Army might be reduced, but here was one which the experience of the South African War showed could at once be applied. He did not think the House sufficiently realised the financial strain put upon us. Few realised that the expenditure the House had already agreed to in principle was as great this year as it was last, and that there was no new source of revenue in sight. This meant that the same taxes which they had protested against last year as abnormal would be continued not only this year but next year. There would still be an income-tax of 1s. in the £, and there would still be heavy duties on tea and sugar and the export duty on coal. But there was a still more important point. If they agreed that there was no immediate danger of war in any part of the world but realised that there were always potentialities of war in the future, then it was for the future that they should make provision, and the best provision that this House could make for meeting future dangers was the building up of a great financial reserve. It was because he realised the necessity of building up such a reserve that he hoped the Government would cut down the Army expenditure.

Mr. Harold Cox.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.) said he did not understand the Secretary of State for War to indicate in any of his speeches that he intended to reduce the garrison of India, and he certainly hoped the hon. Gentleman had no intention of doing so. The hon. Member for Preston had advanced as an argument for reducing the garrison in India that, in the event of a war with Russia, the latter would be attacked by Japan on one side and by ourselves in Afghanistan. He would like to ask the hon. Gentleman, who seemed to acknowledge that one of the chief principles of defence was offence, in what manner we should be able to attack Russia in Afghanistan if we relieved our garrison of the necessary troops? He listened with interest last Thursday to the speech of his hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool on the subject of Army reduction, which had become a hardy annual with the hon. and gallant Gentleman. The House must have realised by this time that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had some cut and dried Army scheme in his pocket which he would produce eventually. They could all understand that during the late Government's term of office the hon. and gallant Member did not like to produce his scheme, but he might do so now, because he was certain the Secretary of State for War would be only too pleased to have it. One thing which struck him in the speeches of those who supported the hon. and gallant Gentleman's Motion was the fact that nearly every one began by stating that he had a mandate from his constituents for economy and retrenchment. It was proposed arbitrarily to reduce the Army by 10,000 men, but each Member who supported the reduction apparently had not the interests of the taxpayer in view, but some pet scheme of his own. The hon. and gallant Member who moved the reduction had an idea that by that means they would be able to increase the pensions of the men, and secure other laudable objects, which would cost money. The Secretary of State for War had struck out a totally new line. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that his idea was to inaugurate a policy which should be a continuous one, and to make the War Office less of an Aunt Sally which anybody could regard as a legitimate object at which to throw a stick. The right hon. Gentleman had done his best in his speeches to raise the War Office above Party politics and to place it on the same footing as the Admiralty. Those who had the interest of the Army at heart and had studied it at all knew that it was very much in need of a period of test. Of late years the Army had been a ground for experiments by successive Governments, and altogether there had been a little too much of Army reform, and a considerable amount of unrest had been created. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would now be able to see his way to give that period of rest to the Army which was so absolutely essential in its best interests. He wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman one question. He noticed in his Memorandum that he had utilised some of the vacant rooms at Woolwich for the purpose of creating a new class, and augmenting the cadets at Sandhurst. The right hon. Gentleman was well aware that at Sandhurst the cadets with the cavalry and the cadets with the infantry were trained side by side. The cavalry officer required a somewhat different, and perhaps a more technical and higher, training, especially in reconnaissance duty, than the ordinary infantry officer, and he would therefore suggest to the right hon. Gentleman whether he might not utilise the class referred to at Woolwich purely for cavalry officers so that they could undergo a thorough and complete training in cavalry duties and all matters appertaining to reconnaissance.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he did not profess to understand the mysteries of the linked-battalion system or the various advantages of battalion training and depot training, but he should like to say a few words on the Vote from the point of view of the ordinary layman. There was, without doubt, a deep feeling of dissatisfaction in the country at the present time with regard to the enormous amount of military expenditure, and he himself believed it was shared by the Secretary of State for War as well as by the Prime Minister and those who sat on the Ministerial side. The only excuse that could be given for enormous estimates this year was that they were the estimates of the preceding Administration. What was the actual position at the present time? In 1895–6 the military expenditure of the country was £18,941,000; in 1904–5 it was £29,595,000; and for this year the estimates were £17,000 less than last year. He understood from the Secretary of State for War that the Army Estimates would have amounted to £800,000 more if he had not effected certain economies. How did he effect them ? The right hon. Gentleman told his military experts, he presumed, that they must reduce expenditure, and in nine weeks they knocked off this £800,000. They struck out items, he supposed, which they felt themselves able to strike out without injuring the efficiency of the Army. What he would like to ask was this : if these estimates could be reduced by £800,000 in nine weeks, could they have been reduced by £1,600,000 in eighteen weeks ? If so, they would have been very glad to have seen them so reduced. But were these military experts the same gentlemen who advised the previous Administration ? If the £800,000 were unnecessarily paid away in previous years it did not give the House overweening confidence in the military experts. He thought the desire of the right hon. Gentleman for continuity of policy and to take the Army out of the arena of Party politics was a very good thing. He should also like to see the Navy taken out of Party politics, as it was to a great extent, and also questions of foreign policy, but he was afraid that that was rather a desire which, owing to the infirmities of human nature, they could hardly hope to see fulfilled in this world, although it might be in the next, where the Liberal Party would always be in a strong majority. Nearly every speaker on the Opposition side had congratulated the Secretary of State for War, and he had been supported in the Lobby by the votes of hon. Members on both sides of the House. He had also been praised by all the Unionist newspapers in the country, many of them hostile to Liberal ideas of military policy. While the right hon. Gentleman was receiving all this chorus of praise he would remind him of the phrase *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*. He felt quite sure that when Members of the Opposition saw a chance to attack his right hon. friend they would be quite ready to turn and rend him with the greatest possible pleasure in the world. Therefore the Secretary of State for War must look entirely for support of his economic policy to hon. Members sitting on the Ministerial side. The Prime Minister had said the other night that the honour and good faith of the Government was bound up in a reduction of military expenditure. With that he agreed, and he was quite satisfied with that statement. At the recent election the Ministerialists received a mandate for economy, and they meant to carry out the promises made to their constituents. They had received a mandate for Free Trade, and to deal with the Education question, and they intended to carry it out. They had also received a mandate to abolish slavery and they were carrying that out. Then there was that everlasting mandate for peace, retrenchment, and reform. It was impossible for them to carry out these reforms unless they first had retrenchment. In his humble opinion they could get the money in only two ways—one was by imposing extra taxation on the rich, and the other by making large reductions in military expenditure. He believed that the Secretary of State for War held the fate of the Liberal Party in his hands at the present moment, and it was because he believed that the right hon. Gentleman realised his responsibility and had promised that so far as a man could do he would reduce the cost of the Army that he gave him his support the other night, and intended to support him again on this occasion.

*SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said the hon. Member for Barnstaple had warned them that the time might come when the Members of the Opposition would turn and rend the Secretary of State for War. He wished to point out that that was what had taken place already, but the attack came from below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House ; and therefore the right hon. Gentleman could not complain of too harsh criticisms from the Opposition. He wished to join in the congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman for his recent speech. He had laid down certain principles which every sensible man and every earnest Army reformer must agree with. The right hon. Gentleman had rejected all things that did not make for fighting efficiency, and had told the House that he had been occupied in endeavouring to discover how much could be eliminated which did not make for fighting efficiency. He agreed with those sentiments, but he hoped and trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would have the courage to carry those principles to their logical conclusion. In a recent debate the right hon. Gentleman had been called upon to reduce the Army by 10,000 men in the course of the year. Those reductions might be quite possible when the Secretary of State had completed his inquiries, but he could never see why if those reductions were to be made they should be confined to one branch of the Service alone. The Regular Army had been spoken of as if it was the only part of the forces of the Crown that could be reduced; but, if the right hon. Gentleman carried out the principles he had enunciated he would also turn his attention to the Volunteers. The Secretary of State for War was a strong disciple of the "blue-water" school, and if the principles of that school were also carried to their logical conclusion, if what he said with regard to the possibility of invasion, or even of a serious raid was admitted, then the Volunteers, really and honestly regarded, became as obsolete and out of date as those forts and defences which the right hon. Gentleman had referred to in his opening speech. But he did not go so far as that. The Volunteers fulfilled a great and important part in the forces of the nation; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be content with merely putting down large figures, such as 270,000 men, without going closely into the military efficiency of the individuals who went to make up that number. Let him have a large force by all means; but, if his principles with regard to fighting efficiency were to be carried out, the right hon. Gentleman would find upon inquiry that there were large numbers of men in the Volunteers who were known to be of no fighting efficiency whatsoever, and who never would, under any amount of training, become really efficient soldiers, [Cries of "No, No," and "Oh, Oh," and "Why?"] If hon. Members would refer to the numerous reports such as those issued by the Norfolk Commission, and the Royal Commission on the War, they would find statements of witness after witness, of Volunteer and Militia officers, and statements made upon the highest military authority to the effect that there were large bodies of men in all branches of the Service, notably in the Volunteers and the Militia, who not only were not now efficient units, but who could show no prospect whatever of ever becoming efficient. He could quote passage after passage from the Blue-books to that effect. If that was the case he asked the Secretary of State for War in the process of this close inquiry which he was going to make to look carefully into that matter. He would ask him to confer with such experts as Sir George Clark, who more strongly than any other man had laid down the principle that we were simply living in a fool's paradise if we kept up large bodies of men who showed no prospect whatever of ever becoming really efficient fighting men. He wished to refer briefly to the orders which had been issued with regard to the brigading of the Volunteers. The Royal Commission on the War laid down that the Volunteer force should be organised on its war formation of brigades and divisions, that commanders and staff should be appointed, that they should hold no other appointments, and that they should be responsible for the training, instruction, and inspection of those bodies, and also for their mobilisation, and for leading them in time of war. The recent orders with regard to the brigading of Volunteers seemed to set aside that important recommendation. He noticed that nineteen brigades had been organised for coast defence and twenty-five brigades presumably for service in the field. Those brigades were composed of various numbers of battalions, some containing seven and others six, five, four, and three battalions. He did not think the Secretary of State for War could possibly argue that that was a war organisation in any shape or form, because such brigades could take no place in a war. It would be impossible for brigades of these different sizes to exist, and he submitted that if it was pretended that this was a war organisation it should be stated now because they ought not to delude themselves that the Volunteers were organised for war when that was not the case. With regard to the Militia, the right hon. Gentleman had told them that for a great many years past the Militia had been bled white in order to feed the Line. The Secretary of State for War, like many of his predecessors, objected to that, and thought it was a great evil and very bad for the Militia; but if the blood was to be maintained in the veins of the Militia, how was the right hon. Gentleman going to supply blood to the Regular Army? He knew that from year to year some 15,000 men passed from the Militia into the ranks of the Regular Army. A difficulty which had always occurred to him was that they would deprive themselves of recruits for the Regular Army if the Militia was to be turned into a popular force, and if men were to be attracted to it. The position at present was that there were not enough men to go round. The Volunteers were competing for men with the Militia in many districts, so that there were really three competing forces. No suggestion had been thrown out to overcome the difficulty of increasing the popularity and efficiency of the Militia without at the same time exercising a destructive influence on the Line. When the Militia Vote came to be discussed they would be able to find out more on that most important subject. In regard to the general staff, the Secretary of State in his speech referred to the great step in advance which had been taken by his predecessors. That was a very old fad of his own, and he had brought it forward ever since he had been in this House. He had even been snubbed for his pains. Once the late Prime Minister turned to him and said that he was suggesting the introduction into the British Army of German ideas which were not applicable to our military organisation. The time had now come when we no longer hesitated to imitate not only Germany in this respect, but every other great military Power on the Continent. He rejoiced that the Secretary of State saw from the outset the great importance and necessity of having a thinking department properly constituted. He understood that so far not very much progress had been made in establishing a general staff, and he would like the right hon. Gentleman to tell the Committee on what basis it was to be founded, and how far his military advisers, the Army Council and so forth, had gone in laying down the line as to how that body was to be recruited. The right hon. Gentleman was well aware that in Germany privileges were given to the permanent officers belonging to the general staff. The time taken for their promotion was shortened, and they got advantages of all kinds. They were thus encouraged to fit themselves for great and responsible positions as staff officers. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech said something about the scientific side of military affairs, and asked why degrees should not be given for arts and science for the Army as well as for other branches of science and art. He hoped that some scheme similar to that which at present existed in Germany in regard to passing through the general staff might be adopted in this country, and that thereby the very cream of our officers might be induced to qualify themselves in that way. As to India, he rejoiced to find that the anxiety which was displayed, after the right hon. Gentleman first spoke, as to the reduction of the garrison, was an anxiety which need not have occurred, and that in his second speech the right hon. Gentleman repudiated any desire of immediately—he himself hoped at any time—materially reducing the garrison in India. Although the possibility of the invasion of India might be remote, it would, he thought, be admitted that, in view of the present position of Russia, and of the fact that we had entered into a treaty with Japan, we should devote ourselves to the consolidation and the completion of our preparations for the defence of India. He hoped the question of the defence of India would be carefully thought out by the right hon. Gentleman and the Defence Committee before any decision was arrived at.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the hon. Member for Barnstaple had appealed to the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the Liberal Party, and said that the right hon. Gentleman in this matter held the fortunes of the Liberal Party in his hands. He hoped and believed it was not in that spirit that the right hon. Gentleman would deal with the Army. It was for that reason, and because of the proper and necessary deliberation with which he had dealt with reform and reductions, that they all rushed to his support on Thursday last, when the right hon. Gentleman had to repel the attack of a Parliamentary

Mad Mullah with a following of Irregulars in the House. He used the term Mad Mullah, of course, in a Parliamentary sense, and he thought no description could be more suitable to the occasion. In moving the reduction of 10,000 men the hon. and gallant Member for Abercromby Division said he did not care when or how the reduction was made in these bloated armaments, provided that it was made. All he could say was that the expression he had used was an exceedingly moderate one, if reform in haste regardless of consequences was pressed upon a responsible Minister.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he was sure the hon. Member did not wish to misrepresent what he did say. He must have got hold of a wrong report of the speech. He stated that the object of his Amendment was to suggest the propriety of the reduction in the following year. He asked the hon. Member not to misrepresent him.

*MR. REES said he would be extremely sorry to misrepresent the hon. Member, but he quoted from *The Times*, and having heard the speech he submitted it was a fair report of its substance. He formed his own impression of the speech, and of the effect which must be made in India and throughout the Empire and without it by the proposal to reduce the Army by 10,000 men, regardless of ways and means, or of any consideration with respect to the frontier of India.

MAJOR SEELY: I never suggested India. I specifically said "At home."

*MR. REES said they could not reduce the strength of the Army at home without necessarily affecting the Army in India. Russia had been crippled, it was true, for the present, but it was equally true that internal dissension never prevented a military autocracy from carrying out external aggression. Indeed internal dissension was sometimes a factor making for external aggression. He did not believe there was any danger of attack over the Indian frontier. Only the Emperor Paul, who was mad, and General Skobeleff, who was not a serious politician, had seriously contemplated such an insane expedition. There had been many invasions of India, but they had all been made by Afghans and others of a more or less local character who were able to get over the hills by arrangement with the tribes. He protested none the less that there was nothing in the present condition of Russia at all to justify us in relaxing our present establishment. He maintained that it was absolutely necessary that there should be no reduction in the battalions at home until the Secretary for War had had ample time to look into the whole question, and that it was altogether unreasonable to be dissatisfied with the large reductions made in a few weeks and to press for further specific promises. They should not press the right hon. Gentleman to make any hasty or ill-considered reduction. No one in the House was more committed to the policy of economy than he was; but reductions hastily made might lead eventually to larger charges, to expensive expeditions, and might disorganise the whole economic structure and trade of the Empire. There were, however, one or two directions in which some reforms might perhaps be effected at once without danger. There was the question of the capitation grant paid by India. When the subject of Indian expenditure was considered by this House, an hon. Member now on the front bench was of opinion that India should not be charged with that capitation grant. He did not profess to be a competent judge of these matters; but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee whether something could not be done to relieve the Indian Exchequer in that respect. Then, there was the question of the payment of troops on the Indian establishment when they were employed out of India. He trusted that that matter would be settled in a manner satisfactory to the Indian Government. Such troops had been of the greatest possible service to the Empire during the late war in South Africa. He would also like, in a friendly and Parliamentary manner, to dissociate himself from the estimate of the British officer which had been given by the hon. Member for East St. Pancras. He realised the good intention of the hon. Member; but he could not accept his statement. There was a time, some thirty years ago, when it used to be said in India that the Civil Service represented brains and industry, and the Army represented the good looks and idleness. He admitted that so far as his experience went these estimates were altogether wrong. He had lived for years with officers of the British and Indian branches of the service, and was bound to say that they were exceedingly industrious, competent, and accomplished men of whom the country might be proud; and he had felt it his duty to say what he had done in their behalf in consequence of the remarks made by the hon. Member to whom he had just referred. It by no means followed that because men were brave in war they were idle and incompetent in time of peace.

LORD CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone) hoped his intervention in the debate would not be thought presumptuous, seeing he had had various opportunities of studying this question from an expert point of view. Hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial benches had expressed sentiments in favour of economy on the Army, but there was no question of economy when they advocated a system of free meals for poor children, old-age pensions, and payment of Members. No practical suggestions had been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the particular lines along which economies in the expenditure on the Army should be made. He admitted that there were various small matters in which economy could be carried out; but no large economy could be brought about without seriously endangering the efficiency of the Army. In the branch of the Army with which he was connected, he granted that some saving might be effected in the purchase of horses. Large profits were often made by a few men in making these purchases. As to the reduction of the Indian Army, he urged that that would be a menace to the safety of the Indian Empire. Something had been said as to the possible invasion of India by Russia. He would not, for one moment, minimise that danger; but he contended that the internal condition of affairs in India required as big a garrison as was there at the present moment. And the reason was that the Indian Government had to show its strength, that our rule was strong, and that that strong rule was accompanied by great benefits to the people of India. It should be borne in mind that the Indian Mutiny followed the withdrawal of various battalions of English troops to be sent to the seat of war with Russia in the Crimea. The reduction of the garrison in India might therefore be attended with the most disastrous consequences. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had said that he intended to reduce the expenditure on military reconnaisances. He (the speaker) held that one of the most important phases of the education of officers was the ability for the performance of these reconnaisances. The raising of the pay of the soldier by the late Government had perhaps induced a certain amount of additional recruiting; but he felt that the class of men whom it was desired to attract to the Army had not been so attracted. An hon. Member had alleged that the feeling of the people of the country did not encourage soldiering; but he maintained that it was the duty of the nation to encourage the military spirit, because we had no conscription, and he sincerely trusted we never should have. The consequence was that the Government had to compete in the labour market for recruits to fill up the ranks of the Army. What had been said by his hon. friend as to the uniforms of the soldiers was very important, because a recruit of eighteen years of age or so was attracted by a handsome uniform which he could wear when he walked out on Sunday with his girl. He hoped the Secretary for War would hold out some inducement to the soldiers to put by a certain amount of their pay. The old system of deferred pay and of military savings' banks was most excellent in enabling the soldiers to make some provision for old age. All hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House desired to congratulate the right hon. the Secretary for War on the reforms he had already accomplished, although he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had received much encouragement from his friends on his own side of the House. He would remind these hon. Gentlemen that false economy would be of no benefit to efficiency, but might result in disaster to the Empire.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think I may suggest to the Committee that the object of a general discussion is not for the purpose of raising any small points which may be brought forward on a particular Vote. It is that hon. Members may raise points of importance which cannot be brought forward upon any one of those Votes when considered separately, and I would therefore suggest that matters of detail arising on subsequent Votes had better be deferred to a subsequent time.

*MR. MOLTENO (Dumfriesshire) said he also wished to congratulate the Secretary of State for War upon the able and masterly speech in which he showed the basis upon which we must work if we would have real reform of our Army system. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to India and our colonial garrisons, and the latter seemed to afford considerable hope of reduction. After the Crimean war in 1858 attention was drawn to the enormous cost in men and money of these garrisons. We then had 47,000 men, costing just under £4,000,000 sterling. The Estimates of this year showed that we now had 58,000 men at a cost of £5,000,000 sterling, so that the expenditure in 1858 was greater in proportion to our resources than it was to-day. In 1859 a Departmental Committee was appointed, consisting of Mr. Hamilton of the Treasury, Mr. Godley of the War Office, and Sir T. Elliott of the Colonial Office, to go into this question, and they reported in 1860 and laid down the true policy on this subject. They said that it was bad strategy to scatter small garrisons all over the world; that the defence of colonies really depended upon the will and determination of the people who inhabited them; that reliance on Imperial troops must perpetuate in the colonies a feeling of dependence on the mother country, and conduce to recklessness of policy, neglect of local efforts, and the absence of that spirit of self-reliance which was the very essence of their prosperity. Further. the report of the Committee showed that—

> "Colonial garrisons when not very large and in first-class fortresses had always found themselves in traps at the mercy of naval expeditions."

The Committee laid down the principle of withdrawal of troops from all colonies with the exception of great fortresses, and that if any troops were to remain they should be paid for at their full cost by the colony which asked for them. That Report was in 1861 discussed in Committee of the House, of which Mr. Arthur Mills was chairman. That Committee condemned the plans of colonial fortification and laid down the main principle that—

> "the tendency of modern warfare is to strike blows at the heart of a hostile Power and requires a concentration of troops at home, trusting to naval supremacy for securing against foreign aggression the distant dependencies of the Empire."

In 1862 there was also a discussion upon that Report in this House, and this House fully accepted and affirmed the recommendation of the Committee. Thereupon the policy of reduction of colonial garrisons was carried out by successive Secretaries of State on both sides of the House, as it was held that colonists must, like the rest of His Majesty's subjects, bear the cost of civil and military establishments. Mr. Cardwell first commenced the withdrawal of troops from New Zealand, and they now knew that it was long since all troops in that colony had been withdrawn. In the case of South Africa Lord Carnarvon and Earl Granville commenced the reduction of the troops, and the Duke of Buckingham commenced a similar policy in Canada. What was the result? By the year 1877 the troops in the colonial garrisons had been reduced to 24,700 costing £1,769,000, just about half the numbers and cost of 1858. In pursuance of that policy, 16,721 men were withdrawn from North America, Australia, the Ionian Islands, Windward and Leeward Islands, Falkland Islands and the Bahamas, and if they left out the Mediterranean and Egypt and counted only those stations at which we still had troops, viz., North America, Africa, China, and Ceylon, the troops had been reduced from 19,471 in 1858 to 11,134 in 1878. He referred to the year 1878 because it was in that year that we again had an increase of colonial garrisons. Sir Bartle Frere went out to South Africa and thought it desirable to have fresh troops there. He suggested that fresh regiments should be sent out to Cape Colony and to Natal. Objection was taken by those colonies to having those troops and paying for them, but still his advice was followed and then there came a very large increase of garrisons. The result was that the troops were doubled in 1878–79, and the cost was doubled. In the following year, 1879–80, the troops were trebled and the cost was trebled. We were in consequence finally led into the war which from 1878 to 1881 caused an expenditure of £5,500,000, and a very large increase of garrisons from £208,000 to £1,000,000 in 1881. We got tired of this and recalled Sir Bartle Frere and the troops. We reduced the garrison to 3,473 in 1896 just where it stood in 1878. How did the figures stand in regard to these stations and the Estimates now before the House? The numbers were 36,909, or an increase beyond 1878 of 25,750. He was not referring to those Colonies which had no garrison, because we had in 1858 no less than 16,700 men in Colonies which had no garrison to-day. The enormous increase had taken place in those places where we had garrisons to-day. He should like to point out where the principal increases were: South Africa, from 3,357 to 19,983; Mauritius, from 583 to 3,352; Hong Kong and North China, from 1,122 to 7,233. He was unable to say anything about Mauritius or Hong Kong and North China except that he wished to express the hope that the garrisons might be reduced, as he thought that with a peaceful policy they might proceed to a considerable reduction. But in regard to South Africa the cause of the increase was clear, and was directly due to the policy pursued from this country. The Departmental Committee to which he had referred drew attention to the condition of South Africa at that time, and he should like to draw attention to what they said on that occasion, as the conditions resembled those which prevailed to-day. They said—

> "Above all, there is the gigantic anomaly of expenditure on the Cape. We cannot avoid calling the especial attention of His Majesty's Government to the drain on British resources which has resulted from our undertaking the reference of this Colony, and to that inadequacy of benefits resulting to British products. As affording a field for British emigration, a supply of our wants, or a market for our produce, our connection with the Colony has not been, comparatively speaking, of any considerable advantage to us. In fact, the only direct object of Imperial concern is the use of the roadsteads at Table and Simon's Bays. Yet in 1857–8, a period of exceptional tranquility, we had at the Cape, including the German Legion, a garrison, or rather Army, of 10,759 Regular troops, and the military expenditure alone was £830,687, equal to more than one-fifth of the expenditure on the whole of the Colonies, including the Mediterranean Garrisons."

Sir Thomas Eliott in his report says—

> "The above expenditure is enormous, and is not likely ever to be materially reduced except by a Radical change of policy."

He was glad to say that that Radical change of policy took place, and the troops were, as he had already stated, reduced by Lord Carnarvon and Earl Granville, and the Colonies were told to rely upon their own forces, which they had since done and shown that they were perfectly well able to protect and defend themselves. He had shown that that change of policy took place, because the 10,759 of 1858 were reduced to 3,357 in 1878. In the latter year the increase insisted upon by Sir Bartle Frere took place, to which he had already referred, and this led to the Zulu War and the war of 1881, upon which we spent £5,500,000 and increased the cost of garrison from £208,000 to £1,000,000 in 1881. Then another change of policy was made and on January 7th, 1896, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson that—

> "He was considering in concert with his colleagues, the propriety of immediately sending a large force, including cavalry and artillery, to the Cape to provide for all eventualities."

On the 8th Sir Hercules Robinson replied—

> "I should deprecate the proposed despatch of a large force."

The policy pursued by Sir Hercules Robinson received universal approval in South Africa, and up to the eve of the War the Cape and Natal protested against the use of force. He had simply given this record to show that there had been no local demand for troops, and also to illustrate the fact that the departures from the policy laid down in 1862 by the House had led to disastrous increase of expenditure and of garrisons in South Africa. They all knew what this policy of interference in South Africa meant. The lesson was plain. Why not leave South Africa alone, as we had frequently been requested to do by all responsible authorities there, to manage their own affairs, just as in Canada and Australia we left them alone? They were perfectly able in South Africa to manage their own affairs if we would only leave them alone, and we might then withdraw all the troops in excess of those who were there in 1895. The enormous cost entailed upon us by their presence was given yesterday in a Reply by the Secretary of State for War. It appeared from that answer that the average expenditure on troops and fortifications since the war was £5,343,000 per annum. The expenditure under military works loans was £3,040,000 for the three years 1903–4 to 1905–6, and the cost borne on the Army Estimates for that period was £12,990,000, making up the total of £16,030,000, which gave the average he had stated. But there was another very serious danger involved in leaving this body of troops in South Africa, because there was, as the Departmental Committee had pointed out, the risk of our becoming involved in native wars. The Colonists might pursue an aggressive and high-handed policy, relying on the presence of the troops. If we allowed the use of Imperial troops we must interfere to control policy. This was a fatal system, as had been shown in the past history of the Cape. If our troops were involved it became a question of one power fighting for another power quarrelling, which was a recipe for endless war. There was a very serious danger in pursuing this course, and the only safe policy was to leave Colonists to rely upon their own resources and to feel responsible for any defect of policy. He had observed that the Conservative Party at the end of last year were recommended to follow the advice of Mr. Disraeli in order to get back to their former proud position. Mr. Disraeli said on the 15th of July, 1865—

> "I am myself in favour of a conservative foreign policy—a policy which believes that the tranquillity of the world is the interest of England; that peace is the normal aim, and that in the tranquillity of the world the state or best objects of English ambition may be legitimately obtained . . . . Since I have been in Parliament—now twenty-seven years—there has only occurred one occasion on which war was justifiable on our part, and even then it was a war which we could not enter upon without hesitation, but still it was a war necessary for the interests of the world."

He drew special attention to those words "justifiable" and "necessary."

> "That was the Crimean War, and on that ground I supported it. I have seen no cause since for the warlike interference of England in the affairs of Europe or America."

It was a remarkable fact that that one war, the only justifiable war in the opinion of Mr. Disraeli, was the one war which all now agreed was unnecessary. So it was with all wars. Were we never to advance? Were nations always to distrust each other? Were we always to give way to those who held the view that force was the only means of settling disputes between nations?

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said he was not sanguine—he did not put it higher than that—that it would be possible materially to reduce our garrisons abroad. An hon. Member had referred to Mr. Disraeli. He thought it was Mr. Disraeli who said—

> "Tell me your policy, and I will tell you what your armaments must be."

The application of that maxim was not more obvious in any part of the world than in South Africa. If, as he trusted, the policy of the Government in South Africa might be calculated to maintain and to foster the loyalty and devotion to the Mother country of all our white fellow-subjects in South Africa, then, and then only, it might be reasonable to hope that at some future date we might be able to reduce the garrison in South Africa. But if the policy of the Government should not be a policy of non-interference, but should be a policy of interference in matters which excited more feeling in South Africa than any other question, why, then, so far from looking forward to a reduction of the garrison, we might look with foreboding to the possibility that the garrison might have to be increased. It was not only true that the number of our armaments depended on foreign and Colonial policy, but it was also true that the cost of our armaments depended on domestic policy. We could not raise the standard of living or labour in this country—a most desirable object—without increasing the discrepancy between the conditions of life of the Regular soldier and the conditions of life of the artisan, and therefore, every Secretary of State for War, and the right hon. Gentleman in common with his predecessors, had, before he could consider the possibility of effecting a reduction, to counteract automatic increases. The pressure put upon him that the soldier should be better housed, better clothed, and better fed, and that he should have more opportunities of legitimate relaxation, led necessarily to the automatic increase of the cost of the Army. He could not quite accept the view that the right hon. Gentleman had effected immense reductions in the Estimates because he was imbued by views not shared by his right hon. friend his predecessor. His right hon. friend had to his knowledge, year in and year out, striven, and not without success, to cut down the cost of the Army. If he could he wished he might disabuse some hon. Members opposite of a suspicion which they apparently entertained. They seemed to think that his right hon. friend and hon. Members on his side of the House took a delight in spending money on the Army for the mere sake of spending money. They were in complete error. Every man who cared, as he cared, for the efficiency of the Army, knew that the greatest peril to that efficiency was the fact that it cost £29,000,000 or more every year. There was not a man who desired to see our forces on the most efficient and economic basis who would not, if he could, hail the right hon. Gentleman with acclamation supposing he could effect a reduction of one or two millions on the Estimates, without decreasing the efficiency of the Army. But many of them knew that the difficulties with which he had to contend were very great, and they applauded him for pledging himself to no plan during his first session in office. Far from cavilling at anything in his speeches which did not seem to accord absolutely with their own ideas, their only plea was that he would not allow his theories to crystallise into a plan until he had weighed very carefully and fully our forces in all their aspects, for they were very multifarious. Part of the difficulty with which any Secretary of State had to contend was that the legacy, not from his immediate predecessor, but from past history, was the legacy of different theories of the Army, different schemes of defences which had come into being under conditions which prevailed then but did not prevail now, but which could not be suddenly abolished. They could not, in view of a new theory, suddenly dispense with all that had been bequeathed to them in consequence of theories now obsolete, but which at the time they were entertained might have been thought as reasonable as the theory of the "blue-water" school which the right hon. Gentleman was now putting forward, and therefore they ought to be very patient in this attempt to secure economy. If they abolished anything which existed they must find a substitute. The abolition cost them abolition terms, and, having made the substitute, they found themselves driven, year by year, into making it more palatable by spending more money upon it than they originally intended to spend. So that there was something to be said for conservatism, not as a Party principle, but as a principle which must actuate all Governments to a certain extent, whether they were Liberal or Conservative. The difficulty of Secretaries of State for War was that they had the relics of all these different theories to deal with. They could not abolish them; they had to adapt them to the theory of the day. The right hon. Gentleman had pushed what was called the theory of the "blue-water" school very far, and the question they ought to consider was, Had he pushed it too far? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman intended to push it too far. It was urged with truth, on the other side, that no Navy, however overwhelming, could finish a war. In any fight they must be able to hit as well as parry. Unless they could strike a blow at their adversary in the course of a war the war would never come to an end. Again, it was true that we might have to fight not one, but two first-class Powers. To put that fear in a more ominous guise, we might be fighting one first-class Power for several months or a year and then be attacked by another first-class Power. The fear of that led many thoughtful men to hold that the "blue-water" theory was being pushed too far, and that in view of the danger which, though remote, was possible, we must have a home defence army in spite of all that the theorists said. Even if the fear of invasion in this case was an illusory fear, the fact that it existed was a matter that had to be taken into account. One form of insurance was not only that against invasion, but against panic, and if this country were at war it would be of immense assistance to the Government that their countrymen should not be the prey of grave fears which might have been allayed, perhaps at no great expenditure of money. In spite of all that he was prepared to say that the right hon. Gentleman, if he understood him aright, was not pushing this theory too far. The right hon. Gentleman had laid it down that we required a striking force. The right hon. Gentleman did not pledge himself to its size, but he did not reject the view that it ought to be the size of three Army Corps. The right hon. Gentleman did not object to the view that we ought to have ready in this country for conflict with trained European troops, he supposed, at least nine divisions of infantry and the proper amount of cavalry and artillery which should go with nine divisions of infantry. If we had this force ready to embark there would be no panic, but we could not embark them until we had established our supremacy on the sea, and we could not embark them if our Navy had been defeated. If it were true that we could not embark a striking force until we were in that position, then danger of invasion on a great scale was as visionary as the theorists declared it to be. If we came into conflict with a great Power, from the outbreak of hostilities we should have to begin to form and train as large an Army as we possibly could. But if we were to have economy in peace our organisation for the striking force of nine or ten divisions could not be totally distinct from the organisation for feeding our peace garrison abroad. That created a slight presumption in favour—he would not say of the linked battalion—but certainly of a battalion system as against a depot system at home, or otherwise we should have to pay far more than we did at present. We had now about eighty-five regiments abroad. After about five years abroad a soldier ceased to be as good a man as he was the first five years, so that new drafts had to be sent out every year to take the place of individual soldiers, and it was bad for any regiment to remain abroad for more than fifteen years. Thus in time of profound peace we had to send between 20,000 and 30,000 men abroad every year, and it should not be impossible to make the organisation for supplying these men coincide with the organisation for our striking force. It did create a presumption in favour, at any rate, of battalions, though not necessarily of linked battalions, and it did create a presumption against depot training, although he believed there must be both in any system. He thought we should aim at getting large and good depots. A very high authority once told him that if we wanted to work our drafts and reliefs by battalions it was no use having four battalions to a regiment; but a good deal of battalion training could be given if regiments were divided into eight battalions, with five abroad and three at home. Could not the right hon. Gentleman arrive at some scheme which would give the training advantages of the battalions and some of the advantages also of the large depots by grouping the Army into larger groups? The Secretary of State had himself laid it down that even in the "blue-water" theory we needed a great power of expansion behind our striking force in order to finish a war within a reasonable time. What had we to look to? The Reserves, the Volunteers, and the manhood of the nation. Yes, but all those forces must be susceptible of training at the time of the outbreak of war. He could imagine no more calamitous day for this country than for legions of men to come clamouring for guidance and finding there were not enough regimental officers and that there was not a staff. There would be the metal but not the mould into which that metal was to be poured. It might sound a simple thing, but one of the hardest problems in the art of war was to show people where to go, how to get there, and what to do when they got there. Problems of time, distance, and direction lay at the very core of the whole art of war. If that were so, it was clear that some plan was wanted which would give plenty of regimental officers, and a highly trained staff, and that again raised a presumption against dispensing with battalions absolutely at home. It was difficult to train men except in battalions, but he defied them to train officers unless there were battalions. The whole success of an attack often depended on hitting the right place in an enemy's position. He defied them to train a staff properly unless they had battalions. They must get each division absolutely and accurately on the very place on the map from which it could strike, and if it deviated by the smallest angle the whole attack might perish. Bad staff work made success impossible. No staff could be trained unless it had battalions, brigades, and divisions with which it could be trained. It did not follow that they must all be Regular battalions, but there must be Regular battalions in sufficient number to supply the nucleus of each brigade during the minor manœuvres which must take place when regimental officers and staff officers were to be trained to meet the day of war. If those conditions were observed he thought we needed some simplification. The Secretary of State already had at his disposal a large number of kinds of troops—the Regular battalion abroad, the Regular battalion at home, the small depot, the large depot, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Volunteers, the Volunteer Reserve, and rifle clubs; and now there was a project for giving some slight training to anybody who would undergo it. Some simplification was absolutely necessary if any economy was to be effected. How were we to get it? He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman could materially alter the present condition of the Volunteers. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had better leave the Volunteers to expand at the proper time, and if he had the necessary staff officers to guide them perhaps we should make the best of the Volunteers under those conditions. But what was he going to do with the Militia? The Militia he would be driven either to let down towards the *status* of the Volunteers or to lift up towards the *status* of the Regular Army. Existing in the air as it did now between the Regular Army and the Volunteers the Militia would die out. He thought the solution of the problem would be not to absorb the Militia in the Line, but to establish some strong and close relation between the home battalions, the large depots, and the Militia. That was an integral portion of Lord Cardwell's original theory; and it was foreshadowed in a marvellous paper written by Pitt to William Wyndham, which showed that they must use the territorial system to bring the Militia and depots and home battalions into some close relationship. He apologised to the Committee for having made these few observations, and he thanked the Government for having given the Committee an opportunity of taking a bird's-eye view of the whole field of military defence. The Secretary for War had his best wishes for his success.

MR. HALDANE said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made a speech of the highest interest, because he had reviewed from a very broad standpoint questions of the most far-reaching kind in connection with military organisation. He believed with the right hon. Gentleman that these questions must be treated as a whole; that the organisation of the Army, heterogeneous though that Army was, was one and indivisible; and yet, as had been said, one was confronted at every turn by difficulties. The right hon. Gentleman had begun his speech with a rather gloomy forecast about economy. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman was mistaken in that respect. He had always thought economy was not a thing that would be accomplished at a stroke, that it was easier to talk about than to effect; but because it was difficult it was not impossible. The noble Lord the Member for Maidstone had said that the Secretary for War had received more encouragement from the Opposition side of the House than from his own, but he did not think the noble Lord was right. On his banner was inscribed, no doubt, the word "efficiency," but the word "economy" was also inscribed upon it, and on the question of economy he was bound to say that he had received most ample encouragement from the Ministerial side of the House—as much as he could possibly desire. For efficiency he had received much encouragement too. He could not help thinking that hon. Members ought not to grudge him the transient momentary popularity which he enjoyed. By that time next year it was possible—if he were disposed to indulge in gloomy forebodings—that he might see himself the most unpopular War Minister there had been for a long time. [AN HON. MEMBER: That will want a lot of doing.] Economies were not easy to effect, and the right hon. Gentleman had been well advised in referring to the difficulty of automatic increases. Automatic increases were always taking place, and the worst of it was that not only had one to deal with necessary automatic increases, but also with automatic increases which might have been avoided which were the result of changes of policy, perhaps dating a very long way back, and which were not easy to alter when once they had become operative. Yet, notwithstanding all the difficulties, it seemed to him that there was room in the present condition of things for—he would not put it higher—a hope of economy, substantial economy, in Army organisation. He did not say that he individually could do it, but he did say that he thought it could be done. He could not forget that the Estimates had gone up £11,500,000 in the very short time of about ten years, and he could not forget that even taking the ideal of a striking force of three Army corps, or nine divisions, on the Indian basis, there was a vast surplus which arose from want of organisation of the Army as a whole. He gave the figures the other day, simply quoting them roughly and from memory. We required for the nine divisions 130,000 men. We had, on the footing of mobilising, as we wanted to mobilise for this purpose, our reserves, and taking into account the Militia and Yeomanry, 330,000 men in the country—a surplus of 200,000 men. We wanted a large amount of support for etceteras, but 200,000 was an enormous surplus, and it seemed to him hard if it were not possible to get out of that something very substantial indeed in the way of reduction. It also seemed to him that such a reduction ought to be compatible with more efficiency, and to be possible with a very substantial body of men who were not really required for any Imperial organisation on the basis of nine divisions or three Army corps. That, at any rate, was the problem which the War Secretary to-day had to face. The Member for Croydon had faced it, and he appreciated thoroughly the way in which he had desired to get at the solution of the problem. But he had never been able to agree with the right hon. Gentleman. He felt himself much nearer to the Member for Dover in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of what had been called—and he agreed with him that it was an unsatisfactory name—the linked-battalion system. It was better to speak of feeding and training battalions. The system was one in which, instead of depots being used to train or feed, battalions were used for this purpose. He agreed that the system was not one to be lightly or rashly abandoned. He did not pledge himself to it, but he felt that it was a system which had a great deal of promise and potency in it, and he was astonished at the acerbity which had been introduced into this matter. As to the controversy to which the system had given rise, he could only say that he had taken part in many controversies, theological and political, controversies of every sort, but in none had he noticed a sharper division of opinion than on this question of battalions *versus* depots as instruments of training for the British Army. It was hopeless to expect to get men to agree about it. We might as well expect them to agree about predestination. This controversy would go on in the House session after session, with the result that the only way the unfortunate Secretary for War who desired to learn could pursue was to listen to all sides and, after hearing all that was to be said, to take his own way. He could only say at this moment that whatever might be said against our system of feeding battalions, it had a great many advantages —advantages to which the Member for Dover had already referred. For our money we got more *cadres* under this than under any other system. The home *cadre* was very important from the point of view of fighting efficiency. It was only in time of peace that the home battalion which fed the battalion abroad was passing drafts through it. In time of war the reserve was called out and these skeleton battalions—skeleton battalions so far as efficient fighting men were concerned — were clothed. In the Cardwell system they preserved the spirit of territorialism. All he wished to observe about the Cardwell system was that it was a system from which he was not going to depart lightly. He might have to depart from it; but he would have to know a reason very definitely before making a change which seemed to him to go to the root of the organisation of the British Army. Depots must not only be great depots, but they must do very different work from anything they knew any depot was doing now. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to Caterham. He was himself at Caterham very recently, and he found that the Guards recruit received sixteen week's training there. His battalion, of course, was always at home, and he was trained in his battalion at home. He had only sixteen weeks in that big depot. The depot itself never could produce the training of the battalion, though it could give education and a certain amount of preparation to the soldier which would enable him to work better at battalion work; but the work of the battalion it could not give. Moreover, there was another great difficulty in these large depots. India would not take troops who were not seasoned—troops less than twenty years of age. The reason of that was to be found in the conditions of health in India. How were men of twenty years of age to be got from a depot at home? A depot was not a place where a man could be kept a couple of years; and if it was required to recruit men in this country over eighteen years of age, it would be found that the conditions of the country made it impossible to get all that were required. It would be found that at that age men got into employment, or perhaps got married. A man could not be kept at the depot for more than a few months; and the class required to be trained for India, to be employed there and put to work when they had reached the age of twenty and not before, could not be got in this country in any great quantities. Therefore they were thrown back on the battalion system for training the soldier to pass through the Indian battalion that was linked to it and then to be brought home to the Reserve. Taking it from whatever point of view, it seemed to him, as at present advised, that the linked battalion system was the most workable. The figures with which they were all familiar showed that about 65,000 men at home fed about 85,000 abroad. He included in the term "abroad" the battalions on short tour in the Mediterranean at this time. They therefore wanted about 27,500 a year to feel the 85,000 abroad. Taking that number out, there were left 37,500 available for home service. It seemed to him that the feeding battalion system was a system which required to be considered very carefully; and they should pause before they abolished it as going to the root not only of the present organisation of the Army, but, as he was rather inclined to think, though he said it with all reserve, of further developments which ought to take place, such as a more complete territorial organisation. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken of South Africa and the policy which turned on South Africa. He said that the Government would be doing a very rash thing if they interfered to any large extent with the establishment kept up in South Africa, unless they were perfectly certain, as he understood him, of satisfying the British element, which was our nearest concern over there. He agreed that they must satisfy that element; but there was another element they must satisfy also. If there was to be peace and tranquillity in South Africa so that our policy might enable us to reduce armaments, they must satisfy both Boer and Briton. That was what they had to work out; and he agreed that until they had satisfied, not merely the one element, but the other also, it would be very difficult to bring things on to a harmonious footing and to reduce our garrison out there. But, at the same time, he was not sure that the maintenance of a large garrison in South Africa was just the thing to conduce most to that harmony of which he spoke. Let the matter be worked out by all means; but he was not sure that its working out was assisted by keeping up in a prominent and ostentatious fashion anything like a large military display. There had been striking confirmation in the history of the country of the valuable results that had sometimes come from the withdrawal of a garrison at an opportune moment. The right hon. Gentleman opposite also spoke of the "blue-water" principle and the danger of pushing it too far. He agreed that it could be treated as an abstract principle, and could be pushed too far. They could not justify, of course, the keeping up of the Volunteers if they were out and out for the "blue-water" school; but this nation was governed, as Mr. Disraeli once said, not by logic but by Parliament. This Parliament was just as much Parliament after the general election as the Parliament of a year or twenty years ago, and as long as Parliament remained Parliament, this country would never be logical. Therefore there was no danger of their running to extreme courses over "blue-water" principles. He agreed with some of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite about both the Volunteers and the Militia; they had to consider them also as well as the Regular Army in considering our fighting efficiency. The country had no right to keep them up to the present point unless it got value for its money. He thought he went a little slower than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon in his way of approaching these things. He thought the country could get value for its money out of both the Militia and the Volunteers without taking any sudden or strong step with regard to them. They could not, however, be left as they were now. Volunteers hovered between being Regular soldiers and not being soldiers at all. They could not be justified as men to be put against Regulars without a great deal more training than they got at the present time, and they could not get that training in time of peace. On the other hand, the Militia, he agreed, must have something done. They must be brought nearer to the Regular Army, and the Regular Army also must be brought nearer to them. He did feel that the Militiaman was a soldier, but he was a civilian for nine-tenths of his time, and they had to see that during the remaining one-tenth of his time, when he was a soldier, he acted as a soldier. During that time he wanted to be levelled up very much more, and he wanted to serve under his own officers. Again, the Militia ought not to be bled of its best men. The best men ought not to be taken out of every company. But the Militia should be none the less a support to, and in another sense a reserve for, the Regular Army. The Militiaman was nearer than the Volunteer to the Regular Army. He was a Regular soldier for part of his time, and a definite function must be assigned to him. When that function was assigned to him he believed the Militiaman would cheerfully accept it, and the Militia would once more become a popular service. No one could tell what mischief was done both to the Militia and the Volunteers by not assigning to them definite functions. It was not that they needed to be stirred into action. They had shown what they could do. But to-day we had no definite notions of what we wanted to do with the Volunteers and Militia. He believed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had definite ideas, but he thought they were too definite. He thought that if a proper and definite place was assigned to the Volunteers and the Militia in the organisation, it would be possible, without suddenly revolutionising anything, to bring them into line in such a way as to get value for our money and to get them in a concentrated form such as they were not in at the present moment. On the whole, though it was a policy which some might regard as open to a certain amount of suspicion, he believed that his own view of trusting to soldiers, and trusting to them even in matters of economy, was not only easiest, but cheapest. After all, they were dealing with matters of a highly technical kind, and soldiers were just as good economists as anybody else. If they got the chance, and if a Minister set to work to get their sympathy on his side, there was not a man in the War Office who did not desire to bring down the cost of the Army if it could possibly be done consistently with efficiency, and there were many men there who thought that the efficiency which all desired could be obtained for a less expenditure of money than it cost at the present time. He thought that was the spirit which existed among the military experts, and when that spirit existed among the military experts it was well to have them on one's side. It was desirable in the interests of economy to work with the experts, and, above all, to have a settled policy accepted as far as possible by both Parties, and by that great middle element which set the tone to both Parties, which would enable one to carry on continuously without sudden reversals and upheavals always resulting in vast expenditure. The policy of grouping regiments, which had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, required to be pursued with extreme caution. It might mitigate some of the pressure which occasionally arose under the Cardwell system, although that pressure had been exaggerated. He was a Scotsman, and, although only a Lowlander, would shrink from the notion of grouping kilts in the Highland regiments. There would be peril of exciting jealousies if these regiments, with their distinctive traditions and tartans, were grouped. The noble Lord the Member for Maidstone had not sufficiently distinguished between reconnaissances and staff rides, The surveys of the *terra* ought not to be surveys of the *terra* of the United Kingdom, but of places where there was real use for such services. What an advantage it would have been if the money spent on surveys some years ago in preparing for the defence of the United Kingdom, which was already adequately defended by the Fleet, had been spent in surveying South Africa! In the last war we had no maps, no information about positions. The right figure which he should have given as the cost of staff surveys in this country was £7,000, not £14,000. He would consider the proposal of the hon. Member for West Marylebone with regard to cadets, but thought there might be difficulties in the way. He reminded the hon. Member for Blackpool that there were more urgent matters to be attended to before much money could be spent on clothes. He did not think there was a great deal to be complained of in the present dress. The Army was, and must be, on short commons for some time. There was no room for luxuries. The reduction of £800,000 had been referred to by the hon. Member for Barnstaple. That reduction was made by severe pruning down expenses without any sacrifice of efficiency; to cut down to the same extent again would not be done with ease or in a short time. He did not say it could not be done; it was the very business on which he should be embarked during the next twelve months. But the only undertaking he could give was that he would do his best to effect further savings. But let him do it in his own way, and with the co-operation of the soldier. He did wish to get it into the heads of all about him that this was really the way that gave most hope of success.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) did not like to say, "*vixere fortes ante Agamemnona multi*"; but he wanted to say in his own justification that there had been people at the War Office before the right hon. Gentleman who had not been stone blind and stone deaf. The right hon. Gentleman had enumerated to the House a number of larger and smaller changes as the result of applying thought to matters on which there was need for clear thinking. He mentioned five or six operations which were supposed to show how easily a process which he compared to the transmutation of metals in the imagination of the alchemist could be performed if they had the mind to do it. One was the application of the blue-water principle to the abolition of the forts on the Surrey hills. In April last year, however, he had explained to the House the arrangments at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Sheerness in substitution for the defences abandoned in Surrey. Only a small remnant of tools remained in the fort which the right hon. Gentleman saw, because they were more conveniently stored there than anywhere else; and the whole cost of the fort was the cost of a caretaker. As a perfectly natural consequence of this new policy, the whole of the scheme of the defence of London was abandoned more than a year ago, and abandoned with the assent of the House.

MR. HALDANE said the fort was full of valuable stores, which were being supplied from week to week. He found new axes had been sent down only the week before his visit. He saw 3,300 Lyddite shells and things of that kind. He did not say it as a reproach, but the forts were full of stores, and were being kept up.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the only reason these forts were kept up was simply that they might be storehouses. If the right hon. Gentleman doubted that he offered to read the statement he had made to the last Parliament as to the orders given.

MR. HALDANE did not doubt that the statement was made; he might doubt whether it was carried out. He certainly saw one of the forts himself in the condition he described, and inquiry of the Army Council confirmed him.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he really did not know to what the right hon. Gentleman referred. The renewal of armaments in the fortresses around the coast had been going on for three years. The date of the War Office action as to the removal of the garrison of St. Helena was November, 1904, and only 200 artillerymen were left there temporarily against the protest of the War Office at the special request of the Admiralty. The reconnaissance service, with which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was twitted in a reference to Birmingham as the centre of England, was overhauled in May, 1904, and the work severely limited to certain work on the south-east and south-west coasts at the expense only of the out-of-pocket expenses of the officers. It was on entirely military grounds that a limited number were retained, and now he understood the right hon. Gentleman was going to stop their operations. He was unable to ascertain what was the extra expense, but in his opinion it was limited to £100, and he would like to know whether the engineer officers would continue to be employed in carrying out this service. Another example brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman was the Tidworth barracks, and he said they should not be there. Quite true; but in fairness it might be mentioned that last year he told the House that at the second meeting he attended at the War Office he gave orders to stop barrack construction, and in this way an expenditure of £1,500,000 was stopped. This style of barracks was most distasteful to recruits, and he decided that no more of them should be built. That was decided three years ago. Of the barracks which the right hon. Gentleman saw the foundations had been laid, and these were left. He did not wish to make too much of small matters, but it would not have been fair to the Committee not to have mentioned that action had already been taken, guided by those considerations that had influenced the right hon. Gentleman in his study of the problem. If the right hon. Gentleman would look at the record of the Defence Committee and of the Army Council he would find that the questions to which he had referred and he (Mr. Arnold-Forster) had endeavoured to explain, had, with scores of others, been considered, and were not the result of a sudden outburst of the clear thinking which had been alluded to. With regard to the Militia, he did not want the right hon. Gentleman to pledge himself, but he had told the Committee something that was calculated to cause considerable alarm. Two schemes, he said, were under consideration, and when he indicated a change by which the training of the Militia was to be made a means of relieving the poor rates he suggested what would certainly be the greatest possible mistake; it might be a good thing for the unemployed, but it would be one of the worst things possible for the Militia and the Army. If the men were being trained as members of the Army he could understand it, but if this system of winter training-was only to be used as an adjunct to the poor law administration it would be a great mistake. Another suggestion was to call out certain battalions for six months' training and for six weeks' subsequent training. The right hon. Gentleman had said that a man in the Militia was a civilian for eleven months and a soldier for one, and how was he going to make him a soldier for seven and a half months and a civilian for four and a half months? 35,000 recruits went into the Militia in 1904. Six months training on enlistment and six weeks subsequently, what proportion did that bear to the whole? It would be a third of the whole recruiting, and officers must be provided for the training of these men.

MR. HALDANE said it was not proposed to apply this generally. It was limited to twenty battalions and was for the purpose of finding out where, under local conditions, better recruits could be obtained.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was glad to hear that it would not be extended to the rest of the Militia. But did the right hon. Gentleman think the men could be trained by their own officers? Of these the senior officers could give a month to the duty; then there were a certain number of retired captains from the Army, some useful, some not; a certain number of officers who had failed to get into the Army and went from battalion to battalion in order to make an income; and the remainder would certainly not train for seven months. He believed the attempt would destroy the Militia. Did the Committee realise that in 1904 35,000 men went into the Militia and that 38,000 went out of it, that of the 35,000 who went into it 22,000 either deserted or went into the Line, and that 12,000 of those that were left were under the age of twenty and therefore unable to go into the Line? He believed that great harm would be done to the Militia and to the Line by attaching to the experiment the condition that a man should not enter the Line until after receiving military training. In many cases it would mean putting off passing into the Line for from ten to eighteen months. Of the men who entered the Line eighty per cent. never went into Militia training, and the expectation that these men would go into the Line after eighteen months in the Militia would not be realised. Such a system would destroy both the Line and the Militia. They would perpetuate a bad system, and make the one absolutely dependent on the other. Until they gave the Militia what it ought to have, namely, an independent territorial existence, they would always have these difficulties, which would only be aggravated by the proposals made. There was a misconception as to recruiting: it had not been a bad recruiting season.

The number of recruits in the past year had been 4,500 below that of the previous year, but that year had been the heaviest known in peace time and the medical regulations were not then in force. But they were in force last summer, and thousands of men were refused as medically unfit, while each recruit was ten times the value of a recruit under the previous system. When the figures were tested by the proportion of waste, it would be seen that a wise step had been taken. Recruiting had not been bad; there had been an ample supply of recruits if proper use were made of them. He was not in favour of keeping the system of linked battalions. It was idle to say that if the depôt training was substituted for linked battalion training the recruit should not get battalion training. A man having been in the depôt for six months was drafted into a battalion for fighting service. The Royal Navy and the Guards and the Royal Marines were recruited from depots. The right hon. Gentleman was again mistaken in supposing that the Marines were not taken until the age of twenty. They were taken at the age of eighteen, and the right hon. Gentleman was also mistaken in supposing that a recruit could not be trained in a depot in four or six months. The right hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing that they could not get a sufficient number of recruits at a suitable age for India. At present they were getting a larger number of recruits over the age of nineteen than were necessary to supply the waste of the Army in India.

He should like to tell the Committee what was the real essential difference between the linked battalion system and the depot system. In order to keep up the battalions abroad we had to supply the waste. The real waste of a battalion 900 strong serving abroad, taking the period of enlistment as nine years, was one-ninth every year. That proportion was diminished by extensions and increased by sickness, invaliding, death, and discharge. In order to supply that waste, about 130 men were required each year, and for the purpose of supplying those men we kept up at home a great barracks, a battalion 700 or 800 strong, with a colonel, two majors, eight captains, subalterns, and a band, as well as a depot with a permanent establishment of forty or fifty men. That was a wasteful plan. The waste of a battalion 900 strong could be supplied by sending out seventy men trained at a depot twice a year. If the right hon. Gentleman cut down the battalions and retained the linked battalion system he would find himself hopelessly at a loss for trained reserves for the Army. He believed that force of circumstances would be too much for the right hon. Gentleman. The training depots at Winchester, Caterham, and Newcastle were standing and interesting examples of the possibility of training men in depots. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had not pledged himself in this matter, and he was confident that when he came to study the facts, as he had seen and studied them, the inexorable logic of the situation would bring him to the same conclusion, and that they would have the abandonment of the linked battalion system and the substitution of the depot system for it. The right hon. Gentleman had another great constructive plan, but he did not trouble about it because he did not believe it would come to anything. He did not believe that an army of village Hampdens would be any good; they would be a perfect nuisance to everybody. He was not speaking of rifle clubs. The right hon. Gentleman had not let them into the secret; but he had seen enough of the proposal to understand what it meant. In addition to the Navy, the Army, the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers, there was to be a force to be called out when they pleased, possibly on Saturday afternoons. They were not to have uniforms; they were to go to the national schools and be instructed by Volunteer sergeants. There was to be no battalion organisation; not even company organisation.

MR. HALDANE: I have no plan.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said a great many people had, and he thought he had seen many schemes that the right hon. Gentleman had had before him. At all events, this was to be a new army [MINISTERIAL cries of "What army?"]—an army of village Hampdens. His belief was that the Volunteers would not look kindly on this army, which, so far as he could see, could only be constructed at their expense. He felt strongly that they were in danger of sacrificing quality to quantity, and that was the last thing they ought to do. His right hon. friend had not told them where he would get his officers from. He did not believe in the kind of officers of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke the other day, men who made war a bye-product of their daily business. As in the Navy so in the Army; the officer must be a specialised, highly trained individual. He saw no suggestion at all as to how they were going to get the officers. He trusted that in this matter the right hon. Gentleman would be firm. He hoped the Committee would not think him impertinent if he ventured to say that he believed that the more the right hon. Gentleman studied these problems, the more he realised their true nature, the more would he be convinced that there was only one clear, logical solution. Already they were coming within measurable distance of some of those things which he was not able to do but which he hoped were in sight. He was aware that there was a strong and growing opinion in some quarters in favour of the depot system, but there was an equally strong and growing opinion in favour of territorialising the Militia and taking them away from service to the Line. He believed they would eventually come nearer and nearer to the ideal which he had formed, and which he had tried to persuade the House to accept. He had confidence in the right hon. Gentleman, and he regarded him as standing between them and some of those fanciful schemes the whole tendency of which was to sacrifice quality to quantity.

* Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down took credit for having initiated many of the changes which the present Secretary for War was about to carry out. But what were the facts? If they took, for example, a case of St. Helena it would be found that the troops there were sent out by the last Government. They had heard a good deal about the "blue-water" school, but he was not so sure that that theory was fully understood. He thought it was a cardinal principle of that theory that we must rule out of consideration all ideas of our being defeated at sea. The view put forward by the "blue-water" school was that given by the Secretary of State for War, that only about 5,000 or 10,000 men could raid this country after evading the Navy. A certain number of steamers might evade the blockade. When they took a larger number, when they contemplated twenty funnels emitting smoke, it became practically impossible to evade the naval defence which we could put forth. To put it briefly, the blue-water school endeavoured to think in battleships, and regarded all expenditure from that point of view. When they talked about cutting down the defences he would remind them of a Return which was published in 1903–4, relating to the money spent by the War Office on passive defence and active defence. That Return showed that half the net Army Estimates were spent on coast defences, defence of naval bases and stationary forces, and that took no account of the enormous expenditure upon military works. That expenditure could easily be cut down, because it was governed by our policy of naval supremacy. If they estimated half the Army Estimates in battleships of the "Dreadnought" type, putting her life at twenty years, and including the cost of crew, repairs, coal and stores and everything else, they would find that the passive defence of the Army worked out at about fifty "Dreadnoughts," which they could keep in full commission and replace for the money now being spent on the passive defence of the country. To those who were asking for these coast defences he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the same answer as was given to Bristol in 1797, when the cabinet said that if they wanted fortifications they must pay for them themselves. That was the only safe way. Another point to which attention had not been drawn was the enormous expansion of the British Empire, which threatened to outrun our military capacity. During the last twenty-one years thirty United Kingdoms in area had been added to the British Empire. He ventured to assert that if they spent too liberally on the Army it would inevitably lead them to economise on the Navy. The Stanhope Memorandum of 1891, elicited by the Hartington Commission, laid down everything in exactly the wrong order, opposite to the blue-water principles. The first thing it laid down as the purpose of the Army was the maintenance of civil order; the second, that it existed to prevent the invasion of these islands; the third, that it existed for the defence of the coasts and commerce; the fourth, that it was to provide drafts for India and the colonies; and the fifth, that it existed, subject to the foregoing purposes and to financial considerations, to provide a striking force. This showed the immense reversal of policy which was now going on, and which, he thought, would succeed in bringing about the economy they so much desired on the Liberal benches.

Mr. POWER (Waterford, E.) said the increase in the naval and military Estimates in recent years had been simply appalling. He doubted whether there had been a corresponding increase in efficiency. The report of the Financial Relations Commission showed that Ireland contributed more than its proper share of taxation, and therefore the growing expenditure on armaments was a matter to which the representatives of that country could not be indifferent. Even at the risk of making enemies, they had declared their abhorrence to some of the wars of aggression of which this expenditure was the consequence. Ireland was naturally proud of the horses it produced, and he wished to know what steps the War Office had taken, or intended to take, regarding the disease which was introduced after the South African war. This was a matter of national importance, for anything that interefered with the production and sale of horses in Ireland naturally affected the whole industry. At present the trade was absolutely dislocated. The disease was introduced by the negligence of the War Office, who sent diseased horses, which spread the disease all over the constituency he represented. He was anxious to know what steps were to be taken to stamp out the disease. They had indulged in a short-sighted policy in trying to cure these animals. If the animals had been slaughtered the people in the south of Ireland would not have been complaining now. He held that, instead of tinkering away as at present, the War Office should not stand on small technicalities in regard to the proportion of the cost of the slaughtered animals to be paid. He thought the War Office should pay the entire cost of the animals which it had been found necessary to slaughter in order to prevent the disease from spreading. He had no statistics at present as to what had been paid by the local authorities in his part of Ireland, but he knew that the ratepayers were already taxed to the tune of 8s. 6d. in the £1. This taxation was a grievance of which they had reason to complain. In equity and justice the cost should be paid by the War Office, and he commended the matter to the favourable consideration of the right hon. Gentleman. The disease was introduced by three Artillery horses in Waterford, and it had gone over the entire south of Ireland.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said they knew that the Army and Navy were going to cost something like £66,000,000, the portion appertaining to the Army being about £30,000,000. He wished to know from the Secretary of State for War, whether that was all the Army was going to cost.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majestys' Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Debate arising,

*MR. MORTON (continuing his speech) said that in ten years the cost of the Army had been doubled, although they were told by Lord Roberts that the condition of the Army now was no better than in 1899. Unless they could reduce expenditure generally, and that of the Army in particular, they could get none of those reforms which had been promised by the Liberal Party and which were desired by the country. He now intervened in the hope that the Government would before long take some steps to reduce this expenditure. What he wished to know was what was to be the total expenditure on the Army for the forthcoming year, because the Estimates, as they were told by Mr. Gibson Bowles in his pamphlet, never agreed with the total spent. In the year 1904–5, as Mr. Bowles pointed out, although the Estimate was £29,163,837, the total cost of the Army was £37,833,000. This year the Estimate was about £30,000,000, but in addition to that there were appropriations in aid over £3,000,000, and in the Civil Service Estimates a further £500,000 was provided for Army purposes, whilst there was a very large amount to be added under the Military Works Acts, which meant loans. Unless they knew what was going to be spent for the Army out of loans, it was impossible to get at the total cost. He congratulated the Secretary to the Admiralty upon the account which he had put before the House. That account did in fact show the total cost of the Navy, and he urged the Secretary of State for War to treat the Army Estimates in the same manner. He did not think it was necessary to move a reduction, but he contended that they were only doing their duty in calling attention to these matters before the money was voted and spent. The cost of the Army must be reduced, otherwise the Government could not carry out the reforms promised to the country. He would like the Committee to say, "There is £20,000,000, and you must carry on your Army with that; you will have no more." He was told that there were £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 wasted in the Army, and that by a little economy a good deal of money would be saved. He noticed in the Estimates a charge of £71,700 for chaplains and ministers, and a separate charge of £1,000 for a chaplain general, and £50 for his clerk. Why was not that amount of £1,050 put in with the £71,700? He supposed the reason was that that was waste and nothing was done for the money. It was for that reason he called attention to those items, and he had no doubt many similar items might be found in the Estimates. Taxation had now reached its limit, and the people could not find more money to carry out the reforms that were necessary for the well-being of the country. The money could only be found by saving. The Liberal Party had promised these reforms and they had promised large reductions in the cost of the Army in order to provide the money. What we wanted in this country was the settlement of disputes by arbitration, and that instead of spending money on Armies the Government should place themselves at the head of a league of peace and do away with these great armaments. Although everything connected with War was bad, it was necessary, he supposed, for us to keep an efficient Army, but he did not see why we should not have a good one at a much less cost. This country had been warned against this kind of expenditure. Lord Lytton had said—

> "Let England draw the moral and beware not only of wars which exhaust, but of Governments which impoverish. A waste of the public wealth is the most lasting of afflictions."

If the present expenditure of the Army was continued the exact state of things which Lord Lytton warned the country against would occur. Tacitus, who flourished about the year 90, also pointed a moral when he said—

> "The treasury which is drained by extravagance must be refilled by crime."

There appeared to have been a wicked Tory Party even in those early days. He contended that to spend money on the Army for mere fighting purposes when the money was wanted for the purposes of necessary reforms in this country was a crime against the community. What was wanted was a Liberal Party which would insist upon the Government's doing what was right, and upon their keeping their pledges, which they could not do if they went on in this extravagant manner. They would never be able to reduce Army expenditure until they got a House of Commons which would refuse to vote blindly whatever was put before them, but which, instead, would warn Ministers of the consequences of recklessly spending money in the way they were now doing. They did not go to the country for the mere purpose of changing one set of Ministers for another. The Liberals were placed in power in order to reduce expenditure and in order that the people of this country should be better served than before.

*Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.) urged that inasmuch as the introduction of the disease epizootic lymphangitis into Ireland was entirely owing to the incompetence and negligence of the members of the Army Veterinary Department, the large area of that country affected was entitled to some compensation. This was a serious matter for Ireland, for the horse trade was of very great importance to a large area; and the introduction of the disease had caused a considerable money loss. The Waterford County Council had paid no less than £800 compensation under the Diseases of Animals Act, and the Waterford Agricultural Society had lost £350 in connection with the show, which was prohibited on account of the existence of the disease. He was told by the right hon. Member for South Dublin last session that there was no statutory power to enable a sum to be paid out of Imperial funds to compensate for the loss caused, but he found from an answer given by the Secretary of State last session that the War Office had paid small sums to officers who had lost their horses in consequence of the disease.

*Mr. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) said there was one point to which he desired to call attention—a point which seemed not to have been sufficiently mentioned during the debate. While a good deal had been said about economy, only one class of economy had occupied the attention of the Committee, the economy of saving money. There was another kind of economy even more important, and that was that the country should get value for the money spent. The smaller the Army the more important it was that the officers should be very highly trained. He spoke as a civilian, although he had served as a Volunteer at a public school and at the University and in the Yeomanry. He agreed with much that had been said as to the importance of economy as regarded saving, but he desired to add a few words as to the economy of efficiency. The total increase in the expenditure for their armies and navies during the past ten years by the four great military Powers of Europe—Russia, Germany, France and Italy—amounted to £27,000,000; whereas the increase in the cost of naval and military forces of the United Kingdom for the same period was £50,000,000. These figures were sufficient to show what an extremely serious problem had to be faced. In Clode's "Military Forces of the Crown" it was pointed out that the pay of officers in Line regiments had not been materially increased for more than a century. It had been said that officers received allowances for various requirements, such as furniture for their rooms and mess furniture, but, in fact, these allowances were allowances to the Government rather than to the officers. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*, which might be interpreted by officers that they regard with a certain reasonable suspicion offers from the War Office to supply them with furniture on the hire system. In nineteen years an officer would have paid for the hire of his furniture double the sum originally paid for it by the Government, and it remained the property of the Government after an officer had paid for it twice over. Moreover any repairs needed were paid for by the officers themselves. That he called an Imperial hire system, and the Government made an uncommonly good thing out of it. He had no objection to the Government supplying furniture to officers, but they should not make a profit out of it. On the other hand, the private soldier and the non-commissioned officer had had very considerable increases in their pay during the past 100 years. The question directly connected with pay was education. In diplomacy proficiency in certain professional subjects was rewarded by an increase of pay. The same principle should be observed in the Army. He believed that there was no profession in this country where so little direct encouragement was given to the technical study of the higher branches as in the Army, and he thought that officers who showed a proficiency in these higher branches should receive a proportionate increase in their pay.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.) said that he was not acquainted with linked battalions or other military matters, but he and his fellow Labour Members had been sent to Parliament on a distinct issue, viz., to protest against the enormous expenditure on the Army. It would not be consistent for his own dignity, or in accordance with the wishes of his constituents, if he did not make clear to the Committee his position on this matter. He thought the right hon. the Secretary for War might well reconsider the attitude he had taken up after the more than flattering comments which had been passed upon his splendid speeches by the Gentlemen on the Opposition benches. If there was anything in the world that would lead him to doubt that the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was a good one, it would be the flattering manner in which it had been received by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition benches. A start had been made on a wrong basis. The present year seemed to have been the basis taken, whereas it should have been, both as regarded the number of men and the expenditure of money, the year 1897. What was there in the situation to-day which would warrant this Committee in passing expenditure for an Army larger by 45,000 men than the Army of 1897? If ever there was a time in the history of Britain when the number of men in the Army could safely be reduced it was the present. The horizon was absolutely clear, thanks in a great measure to the good offices of the King, and of hon. Gentlemen who had made sacrifices in attempting to bring about a better understanding between nation and nation; and if the House of Commons was to carry out the demand of the country to reduce the expenditure on our military forces now was the opportunity to begin. He quite understood the difficulty of the present Secretary for War, who had to take over a bad legacy from the late Government; but they who had come to Parliament pledged to a policy of economy ought to have a declaration from the right hon. Gentleman that his policy was not to be based on the expenditure of the late Government, but on that of 1897. In 1897 the expenditure in the Army amounted to £19,500,000; in 1906 it had leapt up to £29,750,000. There was nothing to justify an increase of £10,250,070 in ten years. Now was the time to practice economy, when there were no complications with other countries. In a time of peace we seemed to be living on a war footing, and that ought not to be the case with a Government returned to power to pursue a policy of peace. The people of the country did not understand more than he did the technicalities of linked battalions and the blue-water school, but they did appreciate the fact that they were groaning under a burden of taxation, and they hoped that this Government would reduce military and naval expenditure to the fair and proper level. He wanted not to be only logical but consistent. War was to him an abomination, and his experience as a Labour leader had shown him the appalling effect of strikes. He was glad to say that at the last international workmen's congress which met in Belgium, a resolution, proposed and supported by the Labour leaders from Belgium, France, Germany, Austria and the United States, was unanimously passed, setting forth that all international disputes should be settled by arbitration rather than by war. It was in conformity with that policy that he maintained that no opportunity should be lost for reducing expenditure on the naval and military forces of the country.

*Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said he knew that when a new Minister entered into office he found numerous engagements made by his predecessors which tied his hands to a large extent. If the large sum of £30,000,000 was to be spent on the Army, a larger number of men and more guns should be obtained than now. France had an Army of 525,000, Germany an Army of 600,000, Austria an Army of 350,000, yet the Army budget of all these countries was considerably less than ours. He did not suggest that with a volunteer Army we could compete with countries where conscription strictly prevailed. The greater pay which the English soldier received as compared with the continental soldier in no way accounted for the difference in the cost of the different armies. The English private soldier cost £96 per year, but the French soldier only cost £36, and he was just as well cared for, as well nurtured and as well clothed as the English private. Besides, for that money France had all her great fortresses and 3,000 cannons, while this country had only 600 or 700. A cannon must cost the same in France as in England, and the same also with a horse. It had always puzzled him how France with an Army expenditure of £26,000,000 could afford to have five times the number of cannons, three times the number of horses, and far more waggons and commissariat stores than we had in England. The Army both in Germany and Austria cost per man less than half the amount expended on the English Army, while their arms and equipments were infinitely greater. He hoped the Minister of War would give him some inkling of the sources of information on this matter, and especially on the extraordinary difference between the cost of our Army and that of the continental Armies. He had never been able to find it either in books or in speeches of previous War Ministers.

Mr. HALDANE said he wished to appeal to the Committee to come to a decision on the Question. The general policy of the Army had now been discussed for two days, and ample opportunities would be afforded later on for debate both on economy and efficiency. A few points were raised in the course of the discussion which he would endeavour to answer briefly. His hon. friend the Member for Sutherlandshire put a question as to Appropriations-in-Aid. These Appropriations-in-Aid were credited for services rendered; they therefore added nothing to what the Navy paid, or what the Navy got.

*Mr. MORTON said that that only covered a part of his point; there was an Appropriation-in-Aid of £1,000,000 received from the Colonies. That was money spent.

Mr. HALDANE: Yes; but it was not money spent by us.

*Mr. MORTON said it was money spent by us but received from the Colonies, Mr. HALDANE said that the hon. Member for Waterford had assumed that the only question at issue between the County Council of Waterford and the War Office was the amount of the claim upon the latter by the former for having, through its horses, imported into the country a South African disease. But it was a question whether the War Office had not a claim against the Waterford County Council for having infected through its lay horses the horses of the War Office.

Mr. POWER said he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was cognisant of the fact that the military authorities admitted that the disease was introduced into Waterford by the Army horses.

Mr. HALDANE said that the War Office made no admissions, and reserved all their rights. With regard to the pay of Army officers he agreed that it was too small, and he should like to do something for them; but standing mid-way between these claims and the demands for economy, he felt a little paralyzed.

Mr. MORTON said that the right hon. Gentleman had not explained why the Vote for the Chaplain General of the Forces was put into Vote 13.

Mr. HALDANE said the details were all in the accounts.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) thought the Secretary of State had risen unusually early, and he should like to ask a few questions.

*Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked whether he would be in order in moving that the Question be now put.

Lord BALCARRES condemned the scheme for the winter training of the Militia. The announcement on this subject had first been made to the House by the President of the Local Government Board, and it was made more as the contribution of the Government, and the sole contribution of the Government, towards the unemployed problem than as a contribution towards increasing the efficiency of the Militia. They were told that twenty selected battalions were to be drilled and trained during the winter. We were now getting towards the end of March and it would be of immense advantage to those concerned to know the names of the battalions. He thought it unwise to use barracks for this training were other arrangements possible, as the best possible training could only be under canvas. In camp it was said that increased attention would be given to musketry, but the conditions for training were surely better for that in summer than in winter.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) rose to a point of order. Should not this come on under the Militia Vote?

*The CHAIRMAN: As a matter of convenience I should think it would be better that the matter should come on on the particular Vote of the Militia, but as this is a general discussion I cannot say the noble Lord is out of order.

Mr. J. Ward rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 222; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 18).

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester)
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brooks, Stopford
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W

Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H(Sussex, E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras, N
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, RtHn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, W. Bateman(Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominst'r
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil(St.Pancr's, E.)
Leese, Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Napier, T. B.
Newnes. F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N(Doncast'r
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Grady, J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson, J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Ward, W Dudley(Southampton
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Byles.

NOES.

Balcarres, Lord
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bolton, T.D.(Derbyshire, N.E.)
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt.Hn.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CharlesCurtis(Antrim, S.
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Govan
Fell, Arthur
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hervey, F.W.F. (BurySEdm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt, Rowland
Keswick, William

Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lupton, Arnold
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col W. H. (Lancashire)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Marquess of Hamilton and
Mr. Pike Pease.

Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907," put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow. Committee to sit again to-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1906, the sum of £120,580, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907, the sum of £42,855,900, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported to-morrow; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY [1st March] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [7th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That 129,000 officers, seamen, and boys be employed for Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907, including 19,466 Royal Marines.'"

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [1st March] REPORT.

Order read, for further consideration of Second Resolution, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,810,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc. to Officers, Seamen and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution further considered, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [7th March] REPORT.

Resolutions reported.

NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY), 1905-6.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £100, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for additional expenditure on the following Navy Services, viz.:—

	£
Vote 8. Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, etc.-	
Section II. Material - -	100,000
Section III. Contract Work	100
Vote 10. Works, Buildings and Repairs, etc. - -	100
Vote 11. Miscellaneous Effective Services - - - -	61,000
	161,200
Less Surpluses on other Votes -	161,100
	100

NAVY ESTIMATES 1906-7.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,954,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907."

"That a sum not exceeding £820,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Half Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay, to Officers of the Navy and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1907."

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,256,300, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

"That a sum, not exceeding £383,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Civil Pensions and Gratuities, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31ts day of March, 1907."

Resolutions agreed to.

SUPPLY [15TH MARCH] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 204,100, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution agreed to.

ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Haldane, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Buchanan, do prepare and bring it in.

Mr. WYNDHAM moved the adjournment of the House. They had been discussing Vote 1 of the Army and it was generally understood that there was to be a general discussion covering the whole Army policy of the Government. When such an understanding was arrived at, it was in order that all Members should have an opportunity of expressing their views on Army policy as a whole. Of course opinions would differ as to the time which was necessary to cover so large a field, but about this there was no misunderstanding, that it was clearly understood that after they had to the best of their ability assisted the Committee by giving their views on the military policy of the country as a whole, then they should take the Report stage of the Votes for the Navy. Some of his right hon. friends were responsible for the Navy Estimates, and the Opposition had no occasion to criticise the Naval policy of the present Government. Having enjoyed as far as was permitted them the opportunity of reviewing the military policy of the Government, they thought the House ought now to adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Mr. HALDANE said that the only question in which discussion was interrupted was the Militia and that would come up again on the Militia Vote. He was very sorry that right hon. Gentlemen opposite should feel aggrieved. The right hon. Gentleman was very good in meeting the Government in the mode in which the discussion was taken, and he was quite prepared to assent to the adjournment of the House on condition of his being permitted to introduce the Army Annual Bill. It was merely a matter of form.

Mr. WYNDHAM said he would consent to that course, it being understood that the adjournment would not be opposed, and that the introduction of the Army Annual Bill was merely formal.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

"To provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 110.]

Motion made and Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Mr. George Whiteley*)—put and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 20th March, 1906.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Friday last, that the right of the Viscount Powerscourt to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such Report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

SAT FIRST.

Francis James, Lord Bishop of Liverpool, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Earl of Ilchester sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

The Duke of Sutherland took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hull Joint Dock Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified, and Bill reported, with Amendments.

Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [H.L.]; Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Milford Docks Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PROCEDURE.

Leave given to the Viscount Selby to attend the Select Committee of the House of Commons (pursuant to message of yesterday), if his Lordship think fit, and his Lordship consenting thereto, a message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (AMENDING ORDER, No. 2.)

Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of the Education Act, 1902.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Regulations made by the Lord Lieutenant in pursuance of the provisions of Section 23 (8) of the Act, dated March 5th, 1906, and instructions with respect to the inspection of estates issued by the Estates Commissioners in accordance therewith.

LOAN FUND BOARD OF IRELAND.

Sixty-eighth Annual Report, 1905.

ALIENS ACT, 1905.

Regulations, etc., made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department with regard to the administration of the Aliens Act, 1905.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Order made by the Council of the borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, I am glad to be able to state that it is not, at any rate in its main points, of a controversial character as between the two sides of the House. In fact, I believe I am right in saying that had the late Government remained in office the noble Marquess

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

opposite (Lord Londonderry) would in all probability have introduced a similar if not a precisely identical Bill. Since, however, this proposed measure is the outcome of a considerable amount of discussion outside, and since also the subject is one which is of great interest to several classes of people in the country, and in no small degree to the public at large, it will be right, I think, that I should explain as briefly as I can the details of the Bill to your Lordships.

The first clause deals with the schedule of poisons. At present the sale of poisons is governed by the Pharmacy Act of 1868, which contains a schedule; but as science has advanced, and the lessons of experience have been learned, various additions have been made to that schedule by Order in Council. Those additions are now incorporated in the Bill, and one or two further additions, as your Lordships will see, are proposed.

Clause 2 deals with a very important matter. There has been for some time past a strong demand on the part of the agricultural and horticultural interests for some extension in facilities for the sale of poisonous substances used by them in their business. Last year, I think, the then Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Fellowes, received a deputation which urged upon him increased facilities for the sale of poisonous substances of that kind. In October last, at a meeting of the Chamber of Agriculture of Scotland—of course a very important body—a resolution was passed making a similar request; and I have no doubt that the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees will bear me out in saying that when he was at the Board of Agriculture similar demands were frequently made. It is proposed, therefore, that local authorities should have power to give licences to traders who are not chemists under certain circumstances to sell these articles. It is not, however, intended in any way to supersede the ordinary business of chemists in this matter, and it is only in districts where there are no chemists' shops that, as a rule, it is proposed that these powers should be given.

The article which, perhaps, will be more affected than any by this provision is sheep dip, which, as your Lordships are aware, is as a rule of a very poisonous character. The most popular and generally-used sheep dip contains a very large amount of arsenic. A large sheep farmer will probably use several hundredweight of arsenic in the course of the year; and it has been found, particularly, for instance, in remote districts in Scotland, that sheep farmers have sustained no small inconvenience through having to send a great distance to secure the raw materials of sheep dip, and it is hoped that by giving licences to tradesmen who are not chemists to sell them, the convenience of sheep farmers will be greatly added to. Then I may also remind your Lordships of the great extension of spraying with various poisons for the destruction of insect and fungus enemies of different crops and plants which has taken place, and horticulturists will no doubt find a similar convenience in this provision.

I believe some objection has been raised, though I do not know whether it is now pressed, to the inclusion of arsenic in the substances thus to be sold. But arsenic has the dignity of having an Act of Parliament all to itself, by which its sale is regulated, and that Act contains the provision that arsenic sold for horticultural purposes has to be coloured in a different way, so that it can be distinguished from other substances, and that the danger of using it may be minimised. It is a more or less essential part of this clause that arsenic should be retained among the substances thus to be sold. The draft regulations which it is proposed to make by Order in Council under this clause are already prepared, and it would probably be for the convenience of those interested in this subject—the Pharmaceutical Society and others—if those regulations are promptly laid on the Table, and therefore I propose to do that on an early date.

The third clause of the Bill deals with an entirely different subject. It deals with a matter which is of interest to the Pharmaceutical Society, and also one in which an alteration is, we think, required for the protection of the public. Its effect is that any person who carries on the business of a chemist in more than one shop shall, on premises which he does not look after himself, he being, of course, a registered chemist, appoint in each case a registered chemist to look after the business. That is a provision which we consider is required for the protection of the public. I daresay your Lordships may remember that in the famous case of Bardell and Pickwick there was a juryman who, having unsuccessfully pleaded to be released from performing his duty, explained that he had left behind in charge of his shop an errand boy who, although a very nice boy, was thoroughly unacquainted with drugs, and the prevailing impression on his mind was that Epsom salts was oxalic acid, and syrup of senna was laudanum. That is, no doubt, an extreme instance, but I mention it to show how important it is that all dispensing of drugs, and the general management of the business of a chemist in every shop, should be conducted by a thoroughly qualified person.

Clause 4 deals with a question which has given rise to a certain amount of controversy. As I daresay your Lordships know, in the poorer districts of the great towns particularly, chemists' shops are very largely carried on by companies. A demand at one time was made—and I think it is hardly possible that that demand could be seriously pressed, because it is one which it would be quite impossible to meet—that everybody having an interest in a company of that kind should of necessity be a qualified chemist. That demand, as I say, is an entirely impossible one to meet. It is of no interest to the public to know how a chemist's shop is financed; but it is of the greatest importance to know how it is managed; and this clause provides that in any case where chemists' shops are carried on by a company there must be *bona fide* management by a qualified person, whose name shall be conspicuously placed in the shop, and in order to prevent any infraction of this provieion, further words propose to enact that any breach of that regulation shall not merely be visited on the unqualified person who may be managing the shop, but on the company itself. That, it appears to me, is an exceedingly important provision. It is one to which, in fairness, no objection can be taken, and it is one which I hope will be carried without difficulty.

I may say, at the same time, that it is not at all the intention of His Majesty's Government to interfere in any way with the carrying on of these companies' shops. I have no doubt they do supply a want. Fears have been expressed that if these companies and their shops are interfered with the poor will not be able to obtain a proper supply of cheap drugs. How far cheap drugs are an unmixed benefit to the poor, or to any one else, may be a matter of opinion. I remember it used to be said a few years ago of the two principal consulting doctors then in London that they differed only in this that one had lost all faith in every drug, whereas the other retained some slight glimmering belief in two or three drugs. Consequently I do not know that access to very cheap drugs need be regarded as an unmixed blessing to the poor. But still, if they want them it is perfectly right that they should be able to have them without any interference. We do not intend to interfere with the provision of cheap drugs of this class.

The next clause—Clause 5, gives certain powers to the Pharmaceutical Society: in the first place, by making it more easy for them to carry out their examination; and secondly,—and I think this is a useful provision—by enabling them to recognise colonial diplomas without further examination in this country. The sixth clause makes a certain change with regard to the sale of the more important and best known mineral acids which, as your Lordships know, are very largely used in many branches of commerce and manufacture. It proposes to enact, not that their sale should be restricted so far as concerns persons by whom they are to be sold, but that precautions of the well-known kind with regard to the marking and nature of the bottle or vessel in which they are contained should be carried out, as though they were poisons included in the schedule.

The seventh, which is the last operative clause, deals with the application of the Bill to Ireland. I do not know that at this stage of the measure it is necessary to explain the rather complicated manner in which this Bill is to be applied to Ireland. I fancy one or two points are raised upon it, but probably it would be more convenient if they were dealt with in Committee than at the present stage of the Bill. I will consequently, therefore, merely ask your Lordships at this stage to give the Bill a Second Reading.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, I entirely associate myself with what fell from the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council when he expressed his belief that there would be no objection in your Lordships' House to the principle of this Bill. I, on my part, certainly have no reason to object to it in principle. I really only rise to follow on the last words spoken by the noble Earl with reference to Clause 7 of the Bill; and, as he has expressed the opinion that it would be better to defer the discussion of the application of this Bill to Ireland until a later stage, I will postpone what I have to say. But I should like to remind the House that we in Ireland already have a system which we believe carries out the objects which prompted the Government to bring forward this Bill for England and Scotland. I am speaking after consultation with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, and I can inform your Lordships that we do not think it necessary that this Bill should apply to Ireland at all, and therefore I formally give notice that in Committee I shall move an Amendment omitting the application of the Bill to Ireland. I am authorised to say, on behalf of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, who were not called upon to give evidence before the Departmental Committee on whose Report this Bill is founded, that they would be very glad if they might be allowed to state their views to His Majesty's Government.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords: I have been asked by the President of the Pharmaceutical Society to say one or two words on this Bill. The Pharmaceutical Society is the authority to administer the Pharmacy Act of 1868, and what I have to say is this. The Pharmaceutical Society welcome many of the provisions of this Bill, and on the whole think it a good Bill. As your Lordships, I daresay, know, there is another Bill before the other House of Parliament which was brought in by the Pharmaceutical Society, and that Bill is, to some extent, on all fours with this one. But the Pharmaceutical Society would desire that an Amendment should be introduced in clause 4 making it a little more stringent than it is. I venture, on behalf of the society, to express the hope that His Majesty's Government will consult their President, before the Bill goes into Committee, with regard to any Amendments that may be proposed or set down.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords; I should not have trespassed on your Lordships' indulgence had I not been personally alluded to by my successor, the present Lord President of the Council. When I occupied that position this question was very carefully considered, and after consultation with the Board of Agriculture we placed on the stocks, if I may use that expression, a Bill somewhat similar to the one which the noble Earl has now introduced. I entirely agree with him that this is a non-controversial matter. We are all anxious that poisonous drugs should be sold with a maximum of convenience and the minimum of danger. Having studied this Bill while Lord President of the Council, together with the Board of Agriculture, I endorse what has fallen from my noble friend behind me (Lord Donoughmore), and I hope the noble Earl the Lord President will consult the various bodies interested before the Bill enters on its later stages. My noble friend Lord Donoughmore has stated with great truth that there is a feeling on the part of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland that this Bill should not extend to that country. The noble Earl, when we go into Committee, will explain how Ireland is differently legislated for by the Act of 1890, which enables people in the poorer parts of Ireland, by passing a slight examination, to sell drugs. I would ask the noble Earl in charge of the Bill to consult the Pharmaceutical Society in Dublin, and I think he will find that, while they agree that such a measure is necessary for the United Kingdom, they regard it as unnecessary and even dangerous to extend it to Ireland. So far as I am concerned, I shall certainly do all in my power to assist in the carrying of the measure as applied to the United Kingdom.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I am certainly not disposed to say anything against the Bill as it stands. I take no part in the question raised by my noble friend behind me (Lord Donoughmore), for I do not know exactly what the state of things is. But I must point out that it is a mis-description to describe the Bill as reversing a decision of the courts.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: It is only so described in the Memorandum attached to the Bill.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: That is so. No court, I think, has entertained any doubt that the decision there referred to was right. I tried to put it right in the sense that this Bill does, by calling upon persons who sold drugs of that sort to be properly qualified, and I think the court justly held that a company could not be examined for a certificate, and therefore could not be within the Act. I thought that was a mistake that ought to be remedied, and I brought in a Bill for the purpose. A great cry was raised at the time—so much so that I had to withdraw the clause in order that the Bill might be sent to the other House. The cry was raised on the ground that the noble Lord himself has suggested—namely, the difficulty of poor people obtaining drugs as they desired.

I only wish to make one further observation. I think the whole question is much more difficult and complex than appears on the face of this Bill. It is perfectly certain that a very large number of poisons can be sold; you cannot get them at a chemist's without a proper prescription from a medical man, but if you go next door, it may be to a drysalter, you can get any amount of deadly poisons, and the law at present has left it absolutely without any kind of protection, because the poisons are not sold in the character of medicines and medical preparations, but under popular names. I cannot help thinking that one of these days the question must be dealt with at greater length and with more precision than is the case in this Bill. I do not say that by way of criticising this Bill, but merely as a caution that when we have passed this measure we shall not have completed all that is desired. At the same time I give my support to this Bill.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I certainly have no complaint to make of the manner in which this Bill has been received on both sides of your Lordships' House. As regards the question raised by the noble Marquess opposite (Lord Londonderry), I can assure him that I shall be very happy indeed to consult the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, and to give weight to any representations they may make. I can assure my noble friend Lord Monkswell equally that I shall have pleasure in talking over the provisions of the Bill with the representative of the Pharmaceutical Society of England, and with other gentlemen who, I believe, wish to see me on the subject. As regards what fell just now from the noble and learned Earl, the late Lord Chancellor, I confess that personally I am in very general agreement with him in the belief that all measures of this kind are only of a distinctly partial character as regards the possibility of danger to the public from the sale of deleterious articles. But, as he, I understand, agrees, that is a very large question indeed, and hardly comes under the head of a Poisons and Pharmacy Bill in the technical sense. And therefore, although I think it is well worthy of consideration whether some larger measure might not be brought in, I am afraid it is hardly possible to attempt to include provisions of that kind in the present measure.

On Question, Bill read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

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THE CARRYING OF DECK-LOADS.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government whether they have acted on opinions expressed in this House that negotiations should be opened up with foreign maritime Powers with a view to the general prevention of merchant vessels carrying deck-loads in the winter time, and, if so, whether these negotiations have been of any avail in checking further loss of life at sea through deck-loads.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, this subject has been before your Lordships' House for the last two years. In March, 1905, the late President of the Board of Trade, Lord Salisbury, promised to send a circular letter to the different maritime Powers asking them whether they would be disposed to consider some international arrangement by which the rules as to carrying deck-loads might be brought into line for all countries. This circular was sent out on April 18th last year, but I am sorry to say that the replies received have not been very satisfactory. The various maritime Powers were asked to co-operate, and three Powers—France, Germany, and Sweden—have not as yet answered the circular at all. The other Powers do not at present see their way to fall in with the suggestions contained in the note. I am afraid that from this it will be seen that the noble Lord can look forward to very little help from foreign Powers.

LORD MUSKERRY then put to His Majesty's Government the second Question standing in his name on the Paper, viz., whether it is a fact that the British steamer "Petunia" has lately crossed the Atlantic with a large deck-cargo of timber between the time limits when the carriage of such deck-loads to the United Kingdom is expressly forbidden by the Merchant Shipping Act; whether the "Petunia" was evading or intending to evade the law by carrying the deck-load to the Continent and returning to the United Kingdom to discharge the remainder of her cargo; whether the voyage of the "Petunia" was of a very protracted character, during which the deck-cargo broke adrift, and the ship sustained serious damage thereby; and what action, if any, was taken by the Board of Trade when the "Petunia" put into a port in the United Kingdom in distress.

The noble Lord said: The "Petunia," it appears, adopted the usual custom of evading the law by carrying to the Continent a dangerous deck-load of timber which she would not be allowed to bring to the United Kingdom. The "Petunia" met with injuries, I strongly suspect through carrying this dangerous deck-load, and was compelled to put into Falmouth. I am only going by the account which appeared in the Press at the time. I am hoping that my noble friend who represents the Board of Trade will be able to give us fuller information on the subject. When the "Petunia" got into Falmouth it was found necessary to shift the cargo in order to remedy the injury. The Marine Department of the Board of Trade, according to the Press, would not allow this, and eventually the "Petunia" with a dangerous deck-load and her injury unrepaired, had to proceed on her voyage. Last year, if I remember aright, a vessel, not damaged but with a dangerous deck-load, called at Glasgow. She discharged one log of the deck cargo, and the captain was heavily fined. Now, my Lords, I think that in the case of the "Petunia" the Board of Trade should have allowed the cargo to have been shifted and discharged, and then have fined the owner, not the captain. It is always the case that the unfortunate captain gets fined for what he cannot help. The captain must take a dangerous deck-load or be dismissed from his ship. I think that the action of the Board of Trade in allowing this vessel to proceed to sea in a disabled condition was very wrong indeed. I beg to put the Question.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, I feel that it is necessary to give your Lordships a short history of the subject under discussion before I actually deal with the special case of the steamship "Petunia." In 1903 the noble Lord called attention in this House to the carriage of deck cargoes to ports on the Continent during winter, and proposed that the provisions of Section 451 of the Merchant Shipping Act, which prohibits such a practice in the case of vessels coming to a port in the United Kingdom, should be extended to those trading to Continental ports. The noble Lord had already previously raised the question in 1901, and in 1904 he introduced a Bill to give effect to his views. A similar measure which was introduced in 1905 was also not proceeded with.

The number of lives lost in timber-laden vessels belonging to the United Kingdom which foundered or were missing, or suffered deck damage or loss of deck load, during the thirty-three years and ten weeks ended March 12th, 1906, was 1,747, of which 1,291 were lost in the sixteen years ended 1888, and only 456 were lost in the seventeen years and ten weeks ended March 12th, 1906. The annual average loss in the first period of sixteen years was eighty, in the second period of seventeen years it was twenty-seven, and in the whole period of thirty-three years it was fifty-three. No loss of life in timber-laden vessels has been reported in the first ten weeks of 1906. Of the 1,747 lives lost, 1,482 were lost in sailing ships and only 265 in steamers. During the year 1905 only three casualties to vessels carrying timber were attended with loss of life, viz., s.s. "Freshfield," which left Norfolk, Virginia, for Hamburg on February 7th, 1905, with twenty-five crew and a cargo of timber, and has not since been heard of; s.s. "Castano," which lost one of her crew and part of her deck-load on April 11th, 1905, on a voyage from Newport News to Bordeaux; and s.s. "Pydna," which lost one of her crew and part of her deck-load on June 1st, 1905, on a voyage from Miramichi to Manchester. Neither of these three vessels came under the Act. The casualty to the "Pydna" is the only fatal one that has occurred to a vessel carrying timber since May, 1905, when the question of deck-loads was last debated in the House. Omitting missing vessels, the causes of whose loss are unknown, the total number of lives lost from timber-laden vessels by casualties to which deck-loads could contribute since 1899 was eight or 1·3 per annum.

I will now deal with the case of the "Petunia." It is the fact that this steamer recently crossed the Atlantic with a deck-cargo of timber between the time limits mentioned in Section 451 of the Merchant Shipping Act, when the carriage of such loads is prohibited. She was on a voyage from America to Bordeaux, where the deck-cargo was landed, and she then made for Dublin, where the remainder of her cargo was discharged. As no deck-cargo was brought to this country there was no infringement or even evasion of the law prohibiting deck-cargoes. It is also true that the voyage was a protracted one and that the deck cargo broke away, the ship losing her propeller. She then put into Falmouth for repairs, where she was at once visited by a Board of Trade surveyor. Some of the cargo was discharged in order to get at the spare propeller. This cargo was re-shipped after a new propeller had been fitted, in the presence and to the satisfaction of the Board of Trade surveyor.

The noble Lord appears to wish to penalise a British ship carrying a deck-cargo to a foreign port. If this were done we could not equally penalise the foreigner, and therefore we should be forcing our own people to carry on the keen competition in which they are engaged at a severe disadvantage as compared with the foreigner. British and foreign ships coming to this country are, of course, on equal terms, and at the present moment they trade to foreign ports also on equal terms. The Board of Trade have received from the owners of the "Petunia" a full and satisfactory account of the whole voyage of this vessel, and are perfectly satisfied that no contravention or evasion of the law occurred. The Board are further satisfied that the whole question of deck-loads is receiving the careful attention of shipowners in this country and abroad. The loss of life shows a distinct tendency to diminish, and His Majesty's Government have no intention of imposing upon British shipowners without very strong reasons, which do not at present exist, any further restrictions in this matter, especially as they would have no power to impose these restrictions on their foreign competitors.

BRITISH TRADE AND METHODS.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS rose to ask His Majesty's Government if they would lay on the Table of the House Sir Alfred Bateman's deductions from 171 Consular Reports as to our trade and methods.

Blue-books 1898 and 1902. The noble Earl said: My Lords, I shall trouble your Lordships with very few words in support of the Notice which stands in my name. I have been asked whether I intended to raise a fiscal debate. On the contrary, I hope I shall say nothing which can by any possibility raise such a discussion. When the Duke of Devonshire brought the fiscal question before your Lordships and moved for a Return of trade during the last three years, I asked him to move also for this document, but I received an answer to the effect that, though the noble Duke thought it would be very useful to have Sir Alfred Bateman's deductions, he would rather not mix the two things together.

What I want is that you should know what was, up to a certain time before the fiscal controversy arose, the opinion of the experts at the Board of Trade as to the state of our trade, as to how far it was prospering, and the reasons why it did not progress as it ought to. Sir Alfred Bateman's Report would not occupy more than half a sheet of letter paper. I will not trouble your Lordships by reading the six reasons given by Sir Alfred Bateman for British trade not progressing as it ought to do, but I would lay special emphasis on one of those reasons. The sixth reason given by Sir Alfred Bateman is as follows—

> "The development of technical education in Germany and the greater attention paid in schools to modern languages, added to the system of sending young Germans all over the world to acquire a practical knowledge of the languages, business habits, etc., of other countries, by means of which they are afterwards able to compete with those countries with a greater chance of success."

This, my Lords, is confirmed by my own recent experience. My house was under repair, and I had to go to a London hotel. There was a very nice young German waiter there, and I entered into conversation with him. He spoke English perfectly. I said, "Do you speak French"? and he replied that he did. I then asked him if he spoke Italian, and he replied, "A little," adding that he was leaving London in a few months to go to Milan to learn Italian. I asked him how many waiters there were in the hotel, and he replied, "Eight." I then asked how many of them were Germans, and his answer was "alle," "everyone." I said, although I knew better, that I assumed, of course, that in Berlin there was no end of Englishmen who were waiters, and he replied, "keine," "not one." To a further question, as to whether that was the case all over the world, his reply was, "Yes." That, my Lords, is an instance of the way our trade suffers. Young men in this country play football with their heads; they do not take the trouble to educate themselves properly.

I hold in my hand a little book, a reprint from an article that appeared in June in the *National Review*, which has vitriolic truth in every line of it. It is by a German resident in England, who is a great employer of labour. He confirms what I have just said as regards the action of Germany. As an employer of labour he found that in this country men he employed had not heard of Nelson, and when they were asked where Hong Kong was they replied that it was in the Mediterranean. I venture to think that is a state of things which it would be well to look into, and it is in that sense that I ask His Majesty's Government to lay this Report on the Table. Sir Alfred Bateman's Report contains deductions from 171 Consular Reports which he had to analyse and "boil down." The Report is one of great importance, and I hope His Majesty's Government will consent to lay it on the Table.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the noble Earl has asked His Majesty's Government whether they are prepared to publish as a separate Paper the Memorandum contained in Blue-book Cd. 9078 of 1898. I regret that it will not be in our power to do so. The Blue-book is still in circulation and can be obtained for the sum of 10½d.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Think of its weight!

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: I cannot think that any useful purpose would be served by reprinting a part of it. The Blue-book referred to is now six years old, and the experience of the Department which I represent in this House is against publishing literature of the kind broadcast. It has been decided by the Department not to publish in future Reports of the kind, as the suggestions contained therein become available for foreign competitors as well as for British traders, and may possibly damage the reputation of British goods. Instructions have consequently been issued to His Majesty's Consular officers to embody suggestions as to possible improvements in British trading methods in separate despatches, the contents of which are brought confidentially to the notice of large firms, and Chambers of Commerce, or published at the discretion of the Board of Trade.

***The Earl of WEMYSS**: I may, perhaps, just say that the defects in our methods of trading are much better known abroad than in this country. As His Majesty's Government decline to publish the Paper I have asked for, I shall print and circulate it at my own expense, as I did in the case of the Duke of Wellington's letter, and I hope to have it in your Lordships' hands by the end of the week.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Moved, That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Commons to consider the subject of Sunday Trading—(The Lord Privy Seal) (*M. Ripon*); agreed to. The Lords following were named of the Committee—

D. Northumberland. L. Avebury.
E. Beauchamp. L. Weardale.
L. Bp. Wakefield.

Ordered that such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a chairman.

Then a message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to request them to appoint five Members of that House to be joined with the said Committee pursuant to the Resolution of this House of the 9th instant, and to the Message of the House of Commons of yesterday, signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution.

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 20*th March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.: — Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Sutton, Southcoates, and Drypool Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

"That, in the case of the Shrewsbury Corporation Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

"That, in the case of the Cork City Railways and Works Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the London and North

Western Railway Company, and the Cork and Macroom Direct Railway Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Council of Cork and the Corporation of the City of Cork be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

"That, in the case of the Hammersmith, City, and North East London Railway Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the 'Corporation of the Hall of Arts and Sciences,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

"That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Hampstead Borough Council,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

"That, in the case of the Middlesex County Council (Tramways) Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Hampstead Borough Council,' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

Resolutions agreed to.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Accrington (six); Beaumont; Chaldon Herring (two); Chorlton on Medlock (two); Clifton in Salwick (two); Clitheroe; Coton in the Elms; Cornhill on Tweed; Crawshaw Booth (two); Crowell (two); Dawley; Goathurst; Harlton (two); Higham Dykes; Higher Broughton; Hoole; Humshaugh; Jevington (two); Keyingham (two); Kilmington; Knuzden St. Oswald's; Little Barford (two); Little Hulton (two); Little Totham; Lullington; Mundesley (two); Manchester; Nelson; Newton; Oswaldtwistle; Pendleton; Pendleton and Mearley; Porthleven; Rawtenstall; St. Oswald's; Salford; Sandford Orcas (two); Scrooby (two); Shiremoor; Tankersley; Thornham; Wentworth, and, West Camel; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ALIENS ACT, 1905 (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented of Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department with regard to the administration of The Aliens Act, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOAN FUND BOARD (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Sixty-eighth Annual Report, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903 (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of Regulations made by the Lord-Lieutenant in pursuance of the provisions of Section 23 (8) of The Irish Land Act, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (CLOSING ORDER, BOROUGH OF STOKE-UPON-TRENT).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Barbers' and Hairdressers' Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRAINING COLLEGES FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS.

Return ordered, "showing for each of the training colleges for elementary teachers, both day and residential, the total amounts received since their foundation for maintenance from (1) (a) voluntary subscription; (b) endowments; (2) students' fees; (3) Exchequer grants."—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

FLEETS (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

On Sir CHARLES DILKE'S moving for a Return showing the Fleets of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, United States of America, and Japan, on the 31st day of March, 1906, distinguishing:—Battleships, built and building; cruisers, built and building; coast defence vessels, built and building; torpedo vessels, torpedo boat destroyers, torpedo boats, and submarines, built and building. Return to show date of launch, displacement, and armaments reduced to one common scale (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 96, of Session 1905),

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I object.

MR. SPEAKER: The Ayes have it.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: May I ask, Sir, if it is not competent for anyone who thinks it injudicious that a Return of this character should be granted, to object?

*MR. SPEAKER: The granting of a Return is a matter which rests with the Department concerned. If the Department agrees it is an unopposed Return.

Return ordered, "showing the Fleets of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, United States of America, and Japan, on the 31st day of March, 1906, distinguishing battleships, built and building; cruisers, built and building; coast defence vessels, built and building; torpedo vessels, torpedo boat destroyers, torpedo boats, and submarines, built and building."

"Return to show date of launch, displacement, and armaments reduced to one common scale (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 96, of Session 1905)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

MANUFACTURED IMPORTS AND EMPLOYMENT.

Return ordered, "showing, for each of the years from 1860 to 1904, the average percentage of workmen returned by trades unions as not unemployed, the value of the import of articles wholly or mainly manufactured, the yearly increase or decrease in the average percentage of workmen returned by the trades unions as not unemployed, and the yearly increase or decrease in the value of the import of articles wholly or mainly manufactured in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Bowles.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Dublin Post Office Staff.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that, when on his defence in the Corcoran defalcation case some years ago, the controller of the Dublin sorting office stated that he had not a man on his staff capable of filling the higher positions in his office; and will he lay upon the Table of the House any statements then made by the controller which were reflecting upon the staff under his charge, and which may still be operating against their chances of advancement or promotion.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Reports and statements in the Corcoran case were fully considered at the time, and I can see no good purpose in reopening the matter after a lapse of five years.

Post Office Committee—Position of Sub-Postmasters.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the position of sub-postmasters is to be inquired into by the Committee on Post Office Servants.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Yes, Sir. The Committee is asked to report on the remuneration of sub-postmasters.

Postal Facilities at Burtonport, County Donegal.

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can see his way to arrange for an evening delivery of letters at Burtonport, county Donegal; and also for an outgoing mail service in connection with the train leaving Londonderry at four p.m. *via* Larne.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Inquiry is being made on this subject, and I will send the honourable Member a reply as soon as it is completed.

United States Tariffs.

MR. TORRANCE (Glasgow, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the United States Government have passed a Tariff Bill prejudicing the interest of British shippers of cotton textiles; and whether, in view of the Treaty of Paris, signed with Spain in 1899, he is taking steps to cable our representative in Washington to protest against the Bill being put into operation.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The measure to which the hon. Member no doubt refers proposes to increase the duty upon a certain class of cotton goods imported into the Philippines. The change of tariff classification would apparently apply to imports from all countries, and would not infringe any treaty rights.

Russia and Immigrants excluded from Great Britain.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official denial from the Russian Government that immigrants who were refused admission to this country under the provisions of the Aliens Act were executed without trial on their return home.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) No official Report of such executions having taken place has reached His Majesty's Government, and there has therefore been no question of an official denial by the Russian Government.

Preferential Treatment of German Shipping at Buenos Ayres.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that German and other steamers under foreign flags receive preference, in entering the docks at Buenos Ayres, and obtaining discharging berths, over English steamers, and that recently the German steamer "Pontos," although not in port, was given special permission to enter the docks, notwithstanding the late special (Argentine) Government decrees, whilst many British steamers, already in port, were waiting for discharging berths; whether he has received any Report from the British Consul in this connection; and whether he will make representations to the Argentine Government that British vessels shall at least be treated on an equality with vessels of German and other nationalities.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) A Report has been received from His Majesty's Consul respecting the congested state of the docks at Buenos Ayres, and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was instructed to bring about an amelioration of the present state of affairs by such means as might be open to him. If the hon. Member will give me any further details he may have as to the alleged preferential treatment there of steamers under foreign flags, I will cause inquiry to be made. No cases of preferential treatment have been reported to us.

The Swaziland Protectorate.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Swaziland is now regarded by His Majesty's Government as a Dependency of the Transvaal Colony, or as a Protectorate under the direct supervision of the Crown; and whether His Majesty's Government will make the situation clear to the Transvaal authorities and to the Swazi people.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The position of Swaziland is that of a Protectorate, administered by the Governor of the Transvaal Colony, which is responsible for the finances, under the provisions of the Order in Council of June 25th, 1903. See page 57 of House of Commons Return, No. 130, of Session 1905. The Government and Legislature of the Transvaal have not, as such, any authority in Swaziland. The Order in Council was published in the Transvaal and in Swaziland, and the Secretary of State has no doubt that the situation is clearly understood by the Transvaal authorities and by the Swazis, so far as the latter can understand the subtleties of British Constitutional Law.

Unskilled White Labour in Witwatersrand Mines before and after the introduction of Chinese.

MR. MOND (Chester): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what was the number of unskilled white workmen employed on the Witwatersrand mines before the arrival of the Chinese coolies; and what is the number of such unskilled white workmen at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State will telegraph for the information. The information asked for in the Return, for which the hon. Member moved on February 22nd, of the number of unskilled white men employed underground, has not yet been received.

Postal Facilities in Nairnshire.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin, Nairn): To ask the Postmaster-General whether representations have been received, requesting increased postal facilities in Nairnshire; and whether he will authorise the establishment of a post office at the village of Little Mill, and a daily delivery of letters to all houses in the neighbourhood.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) An application has been received within the last few days for an improvement in the postal service in the neighbourhood of Little Mill. There has not, however, yet been sufficient time to make full inquiry on the subject, but I will send the hon. Member a reply in due course.

The Telephone Agreement.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is the intention of the Government to place before the House the revised agreement, entered into by the Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, with respect to the purchase of the company's undertaking in 1911.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have arranged to present to Parliament a copy of the supplemental agreement with the National Telephone Company of August 8th last, which was made in order to give effect to one of the recommendations of the Select Committee of last Session.

Appointments as Postmen for Telegraph Messengers and Ex-Soldiers and Sailors.

MR. DU CROS (Hastings): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the rule of giving postmen's appointments to senior telegraph messengers and ex-Army or Navy men in rotation is still in force in the provinces, and if the rule also applies to the allotting of substitute duties to cover postmen's vacancies, annual leave, and sick leave.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The rule does not apply to the allotting of substitutes.

Postal Servants' Associations.

MR. DU CROS: To ask the Postmaster-General whether the notice in the Post Office Circular, No. 1702, of February 13th, 1906, granting secretaries of the various postal organisations the right of making representations to the Postmaster-General, is to be regarded as an instruction to postmasters and surveyors to receive and consider communications from secretaries of branches of such organisations in their districts, relating to the service and affecting members of the class of which the branch of an association is representative; if not, will he issue instructions for this to be done, in order that the postal organisations may be fully recognised.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The secretaries of the branches of the various postal organisations are at liberty to make, to postmasters and surveyors, representations relating to the service and affecting the class of which the branch of an association is representative. In regard, however, to matters solely affecting an individual, and not his class or branch of the service, the appeal is to come from the individual himself.

Salaries of Bradford Education Officials.

Mr. ALFRED HUTTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Morley): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Bradford City Council has declined to pay the annual increases in salary due to their officials in the education office, increases which arise under the scale and are part of the contract made by the defunct school board; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am informed that, subject to certain exceptions, the Bradford City Council have not adopted the recommendations made to them by their education committee to advance the salaries of the official staff in accordance with a fixed scale. The scale I understand to be that upon which the officers were appointed or their salaries were fixed by the late school board. I have no authority to take action in the matter, but I learn from the town clerk that he has recently reported to the finance and general purposes committee of the council to the effect that, in his opinion, the officers are legally entitled to these fixed increases of salary. He adds that this opinion has not yet been considered by the education committee, or the council sitting as the education authority.

Unemployed Committees and Ex-Soldiers and Sailors.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Central Unemployed Committee for London on January 5th last requested, by letter to the Local Government Board, that such facilities as the employment register may afford for obtaining employment without outlay by the central body, be extended to ex-soldiers and ex-sailors within twelve months after completion of their term of service, even though, by reason of their service in the Army or in the Navy, they may not possess twelve months residential qualification, and that such soldiers and sailors were discharged with characters marked as good, and that they have resided for at least ninety days previous to their application for employment in the district served by the district committee concerned, provided that the Local Government Board consents to make a uniform regulation to this effect throughout the country; and whether he has acceded to this request by the issue of a regulation, or otherwise, applicable to the whole country, so that unemployment relief should be available for ex-soldiers and ex-sailors without involving a burden upon London ratepayers.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I have no power to make a regulation which would enable the central body to give assistance under the Unemployed Workmen Act to ex-soldiers and ex-sailors who do not possess the residential qualification prescribed by the Act. Legislation would be necessary for this purpose. Without any regulation these men can avail themselves of labour exchanges and distress committees, and their officers can afford them information as to vacant situations. I will address a communication to the central body on this subject.

Ventilation of Pimlico Army Clothing Factory.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Home Office can further press the War Office to communicate at once to the Home Office the plan of improved ventilation for the Pimlico Clothing Factory long promised and delayed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have already written to the War Office asking what progress is being made.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is now able to fix a date at which the Army Council will communicate to the Home Office the nature of the improved system of ventilation for the Pimlico Clothing Factory.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) Every effort is being made to expedite the presentation of these plans, but I am unable at present to fix a definite date.

Visits of Women Inspectors to Pimlico Army Clothing Factory.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether His Majesty's women inspectors have free access to the Pimlico Clothing Factory; and whether he can arrange for more frequent visits.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part of the Question, there are no special grounds, I understand, part from the question of ventilation, which has already been the subject of inquiry by the Factory Department, for increased inspection of this factory, having regard to the heavy demands on a limited staff.

Famine Relief in India.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India what are the total numbers of persons on famine relief works or obtaining gratuitous relief, and the numbers of such persons in the districts of Ajmere, Marwarra, Bijapur, Sholapur, and Belgaum, respectively; whether any village water-storage works, as distinguished from large irrigation schemes, have been constructed in those districts since the Irrigation Commission's Report was published; and whether the Agricultural Department has been able to promote to any appreciable extent the cultivation of drought-resisting plants suitable for providing cattle with fodder.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) According to the latest Returns, the number of persons on famine relief works or obtaining gratuitous relief in the five districts are, respectively, as follows:—

	On works.	Gratuitously relieved.	Total.
Ajmer - - - - - - -	22,671	1,223	23,894
Merwara - - - - -	23,923	2,626	26,549
Bijapur - - - - - -	1,697	4,125	5,822
Sholapur - - - - - -	951	303	1,254
Belgaum - - - - - -	3,385	3,316	6,701
Total - -	52,627	11,593	64,220

The total number of persons on works or gratuitously relieved in India including Native States, on the same date was:—

	On works.	Gratuitously relieved.	Total.
British India - - - - -	155,302	32,312	187,614
Native States - - - - -	81,771	13,482	95,253
Total - -	237,073	45,794	282,867

On the Commission's Report being published, the preparation of programmes of village works was taken in hand in these and other districts by the revenue authorities, the more important schemes in the programmes being referred for further examination to the Public Works Department. I am unable to say how many village works have actually been constructed. They are for the most part of limited public utility, and in ordinary times would not be executed from general revenues, but by private individuals, the village community, or the district board. In years of drought they form useful relief works, on which the State can find employment for the people. In the present season they are being so utilised. The agricultural departments in the several provinces are conducting experiments with a number of drought-resisting plants, but so far without marked success.

County Clare, Police Force.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, why the police prevented the fife and drum band of O'Callaghan's Mills playing on the 28th February; whether he can state why the number of police in this district of Clare has been increased recently; and why a large force was drafted into O'Callaghan's Mills on 11th March.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Inspector-General that the police did not prevent the band in question from playing until it reached a point, at a considerable distance from O'Callaghan's Mill, where it was feared that intimidation might result. Several months ago, the police force at O'Callaghan's Mills and Broadford stations was increased by three and two men, respectively, because there had been signs of trouble in those districts. An extra force of six policemen, and no more, was sent to O'Callaghan's Mills on Sunday the 11th March in order to prevent a recurrence of disorderly conduct which had occurred in the village on the preceding Sunday.

The Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state the number of the Royal Irish Constabulary in active service in Ireland and the cost, and the number of pensioners and the cost; and whether the reduction of the force is contemplated.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Estimates for the coming year, which show that 9,978 officers and men are to be provided for the total net cost, exclusive of pensions and gratuities, being £923,862. The same Estimates show the present number of pensioners to be 7,736, and the amount of their pensions £379,676. A considerable reduction in the number and cost of the Royal Irish Constabulary has been effected in recent years. The question of further reducing the force has been and is under my consideration.

Prisoners in Irish Prisons.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the average aggregate number of prisoners detained in all Irish prisons during each of the last three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The average total number of prisoners confined in all Irish prisons, convict and local, during the last three years, was as follows:—In 1903, 2,557; 1904, 2,574; 1905, 2,605.

Irish Tenders for War Office Contracts.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether arrangements will be made to establish a depot in Dublin for the reception of samples arising from tenders of articles to be supplied to the Government Departments in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) It is understood that the hon. Member is desirous that patterns or samples should be exhibited in Dublin to guide firms in tendering for such articles as it may be decided to obtain locally for Army use. Samples of stores are available for inspection in Dublin for all articles which are tendered for delivery in Ireland.

Supply of Water for East Pier, Kingstown.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will say how many days per week a family named Rice supplied the water to the Battery, East Pier, Kingstown, at 1s. 6d. per day; whether, seeing that they were prosecuted at the instance of the Kingstown Urban District Council for supplying water without payment, their services have been dispensed with; and if any compensation has been given.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This family supplied the water three days a week at 1s. 6d. per 48 gallons per diem. Their services have been temporarily dispensed with, pending further action on the part of the district council. No compensation has been given to them.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the fresh water supplied to the East Pier Battery, Kingstown, is conveyed from Marlborough Barracks, Dublin, by the Army Service Corps in tanks drawn by two horses; and whether, seeing that water can be procured in Kingstown at a charge of £5 per annum, he will say whether anything is paid to the Dublin Corporation for the water; what is the cost per diem for two men, two horses, and cart to convey the water; whether any saving has been effected; and what is the distance from Marlborough Barracks to Kingstown.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The fresh water supplied to this battery is being so conveyed by the Army Service Corps. No expense is incurred thereby, as the two men, two horses, and cart so employed are engaged on ordinary Army Service Corps duties. Payment is being made to the Dublin Corporation for the water at the rate of 4d. per 1,000 gallons. A temporary saving has been effected by this mode of supply. The distance from the Royal Barracks to Kingstown is six miles. An arrangement has now been made by which water will be supplied from Kingstown to the battery.

Capacity of Ex-Soldiers to serve in Home Defence Army.

Mr. MOND: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state what is the number of men in the United Kingdom, whose age does not exceed forty-five, who have passed through the Army and Reserve, and no longer constitute any part of His Majesty's regular forces; and whether he can state what number of such men are physically capable of serving in a Home defence Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No statistics are maintained of ex-soldiers, other than pensioners, who have passed through the Army and the Reserve. It is regretted, therefore, that it is not practicable to give my hon. friend the information he requires.

Prosecutions under the Education Act.

Mr. BARKER (Penrhyn and Falmouth): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that prosecutions continue to be taken against persons holding conscientious objections to the Education Bill of the late Government; and whether he will cause steps to be taken to stop further prosecutions, pending the introduction of the Education Bill of the Government.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am aware of the fact that prosecutions continue to be brought against persons holding conscientious objections to the Education Act of 1902, and I much regret it; but I do not see how the Government can interfere in the matter pending the introduction of the Education Bill.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Germany and the Welsh Coal Fields.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official information as to the purchase by Germans of two more anthracite collieries in South Wales; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to prevent the transfer of coal mines to foreigners, with a view to preserving supplies of coal necessary for the Royal Navy.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): I have nothing to add to the Answer given by the Prime Minister to the hon. Member for Mid Armagh yesterday.†

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† See page 99.

MR. FELL: There was further information in this morning's paper.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to make a statement.

Dartmouth Naval Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty will direct a ballot to be taken of the 418 cadets at the Royal Naval College, Osborne, and the new system cadets now at Dartmouth, in order to ascertain how many, if any, intend to volunteer for the engineering branch; and whether he will state the result to the House.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It is not considered necessary to take the course suggested by my hon. friend.

MR. BELLAIRS asked how the right hon. Gentleman proposed to get over the disinclination of these boys to join the engineering branch.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I do not know that there is any such disinclination.

Tristan Da Cunha.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the last occasion on which one of His Majesty's ships was despatched from the Cape to Tristan da Cunha, with mails and parcels for the islanders.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The last occasion was in January, 1904, when H.M.S. "Odin" carried out this service from the Cape.

MR. ASHLEY asked whether it was not a fact that a petition had been presented to the Governor of Cape Colony by relatives of the islanders asking that a ship might be sent at an early opportunity to enable them to communicate with the islanders.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was not able to answer that Question.

Defence of the Mersey.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that, on Saturday, February 24th last, a preliminary practice of mobilisation for the defence of the Mersey was carried out under the direction of Colonel Kelly, R.E., and that four Volunteer battalions were extended on the two shores of the Mersey, and were under arms from 1.30 p.m. to 11.30 p.m., and that the whole of these troops were supplied with ball cartridge for the purpose of these manœuvres; and whether he will, in the future, take steps to prevent such a danger to the public.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): It is considered that mobilisation practice in coast defence work should approximate as nearly as possible to service conditions. These conditions entail practice in drawing the necessary ammunition. Special instructions were issued to guard against any danger to the public. I think that the Volunteers may be trusted to prevent men firing ball cartridge indiscriminately and without orders.

Small Arms Factory.

MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what orders are likely to be given to the sword and bayonet department of the small arms factory during the current financial year.

MR. HALDANE: The patterns of both sword and bayonet are under consideration, and no manufacture of existing patterns is contemplated pending decision.

MR. ABEL SMITH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many short rifles is it proposed to manufacture during the current financial year, and what proportion of that number will be allotted to the Enfield Small Arms Factory.

MR. HALDANE: The allocation of orders has not yet been settled.

West Indian Colonial Constitution.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in connection with recent labour troubles in the West Indies, his attention has been called to differences existing in various West Indian islands, between the Government and representatives of the population occupying elective situations; and whether the Colonial Office will consider the wisdom of taking steps to revise the existing constitutions of several of the West Indian colonies in the direction of greater recognition of the interests of the working majority of the population.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The recent labour troubles in Demerara, to which my right hon. friend presumably refers, were not the outcome of political differences; and, having regard to the peculiar racial conditions of the West Indies, His Majesty's Government are not satisfied that the extension of elective institutions would be likely to conduce to the prosperity or tranquillity of the population. The constitutions of the Colonies have been so frequently, and in some cases, so recently revised, that it is not considered expedient to undertake further experimental changes at present unless special occasion should arise.

Re-enlistment of Chinese Coolies.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether re-enlistment for a further period of three years of Chinese coolies, now engaged under the Transvaal Labour Ordinance, will, under any circumstances, be possible, if responsible self-government be granted before the first batch of licences expire in May, 1907; and whether re-enlistment will be possible in the case of licences expiring before responsible self-government be set up.

*MR. CHURCHILL: It is most improbable that any of the existing licences will expire before the Transvaal has become a responsible self-governing colony. After the grant of self-government is complete, re-enlistment, like further importation, will be permitted only if the Transvaal Assembly pass a new Ordinance in respect of Chinese labour which commands the assent of the Imperial Government.

DR. MACNAMARA: Do I understand that re-enlistment will not be possible under the existing Ordinance after local self-government has been granted?

*MR. CHURCHILL: Re-enlistment under the existing Ordinance will, of course, not be possible. The whole matter will be reconsidered by the new Assembly and every circumstance will be subject to the general review of the Home Government.

Kaffir Outrages at Pietermaritzburg.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the number of outrages by Kaffirs on white women and children in Pietermaritzburg; and will he say what steps have been taken to put an end to this state of things.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The attention of the Secretary of State has not been called to this matter. It is for the Courts of the Colony to deal with such cases under the law of the land.

Flogging of Kaffir Servants by Boers.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps he intends to take to compel the Boers to discontinue the use of the sambok in flogging their Kaffir servants; and if he will consider the possibility of making the sambok an illegal weapon.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The law at present imposes penalties on the employer for assault on his servant, and the Secretary of State is not aware that adequate cause has been shown for further legal provision.

Manchuria.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give the House any information with reference to the evacuation of Manchuria by the Russian army.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): According to the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth of September 5th, 1905, the evacuation of Manchuria by the armies of Russia and Japan was to commence immediately after that date, and was to be completed within a period of eighteen months. The St. Petersburg Press reports that the evacuation by Russian troops is proceeding.

Illegal Flogging of Chinese Coolies.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the letter from the Chinese Legation, dated February 11th, 1904, pages 3 and 4, Cd. 1945, in which the Chinese Government insists that it shall not be legal to inflict corporal punishment upon Chinese coolies working under the Labour Ordinance in the Transvaal mines; whether his attention has been called to the assurance of the Colonial Office, dated February 15th, 1904, page 5, Cd. 1945, that this requirement shall be respected; whether it is now admitted that under Lord Milner's sanction this undertaking was violated; and, if so, what communication, if any, he proposes to make to the Chinese Government respecting the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Chinese asked that a special regulation should be made to prevent corporal punishment of the immigrant by the employer or his servant. This was considered to be sufficiently provided for by the fact that any labourers imported would be amenable to the law of the land, under which no corporal punishment could be inflicted except after trial and sentence by a magistrate or judge, and a special regulation was therefore held to be unnecessary. The extent to which this undertaking was infringed has now been publicly explained and admitted. The Chinese Government have made no communication on the subject; should they do so, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to give them a full statement of what has occurred and to repeat the assurance that nothing of the kind shall be repeated.

Congo Inquiry Report.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can say if the Report of the second commission of inquiry into the conditions of the Congo is now ready; and, if so, whether he proposes to press that a copy of the full Report should be communicated to His Majesty's Government and laid upon the Table of this House.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Report has not been published, but I understand that the recommendations which it contains are likely to be embodied immediately in enactments which we have reason to believe will be published next month.

National Repertory Theatre.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has been requested to grant an annual subsidy towards the permanent establishment of a national repertory theatre, in connection with a scheme suggested by Mr. Walter Stephens; and, if so, can he state the answer given to the request.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): My reply to the representations made to me by Mr. Stephens on this subject was that, regard being had to the large number of objects of much more pressing national importance for which funds are required, the Government would not, in my opinion, be justified in asking Parliament to subsidise such a scheme.

Lancashire County Court Clerks.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will give a Return stating the number of junior clerks engaged in the county courts of Lancashire, salaries paid, length of service, and method of promotion; also whether salaries are progressive.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): Clerks in county courts, whether in Lancashire or elsewhere, are in the personal employment of the Registrars. The Treasury has no information from which a Return could be compiled giving the particulars asked for.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): Is it intended to put these on the same footing as other civil servants?

MR. MCKENNA: They are not civil servants.

Passive Resisters.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state the number of persons whose goods were distrained upon owing to objections to paying the Education Rate during the years 1903, 1904, and 1905.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I am aware of the fact that prosecutions continue to be brought against persons holding conscientious objections to the Education Act of 1902, and I much regret it; but I do not see how the Government can interfere in the matter pending the introduction of the Education Bill.

Workmen's Compensation Acts.

MR. HENRY (Shropshire, Wellington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the intention in the Bill to be submitted for amending the Workmen's Compensation Acts, to make provision that compensation should be extended to men and women who may contract injuries to health at their work through lead poisoning, gases, from anthrax, or other causes.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I hope to introduce the Workmen's Compensation Bill early next week. With my hon. friend's permission I will defer answering his Question till then.

Shop Hours Act.

MR. SEDDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will give a Return giving the number of local orders issued under the Shop Hours Act of 1904, and what trades are included; and whether any orders have been made covering the whole of the trades in any particular town or area.

*MR. GLADSTONE: All Closing Orders under the Shop Hours Act are, when confirmed, laid before Parliament and are included in the lists issued as supplements to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons. I think, therefore, that a Return is unnecessary, but I can give the hon. Member a list compiled in my own Department, if he desires. I may say that forty-nine orders have been confirmed in England and Wales, and that the great majority of these relate to the trade of barber or hairdresser. No order applying to all trades in a locality has yet been submitted for confirmation. As regards Scotland and Ireland, I must refer the hon. Member to the Departments responsible.

Aliens Act.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the deaf and dumb alien, who was allowed to land because it was impossible to ascertain his country, or whether he was not a political refugee, is now in a workhouse; and, if so, what union is supporting him, and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I fear that I cannot identify the case to which the hon. Member refers. If it is the man whom I think, my information is that he is a Polish Jew, and the latest information was that he was wandering about the country.

Lunatic Asylum Attendants' Hours of Duty.

MR. PARKER (Halfax): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the number of working hours, ranging from fourteen to sixteen hours per day, worked by asylum attendants, and the percentage of these attendants who ultimately suffer from lunacy; and whether he is prepared to cause an inquiry to be made into the subject.

*MR. GLADSTONE: My attention has not been called to this matter, but I will cause inquiry to be made from the Lunacy Commissioners.

Accidents on the District Railway.

LORD CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the public inconvenience caused by repeated breakdowns and stoppages on the District Railway; whether he can say what these occurrences arise from; and whether he will use his influence with the company to secure the provision of plant and rolling stock which will insure the proper running of the trains.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): Yes, Sir, I am aware that the public have suffered inconvenience from the circumstances to which the noble Lord draws attention, and I have communicated with the Railway Company, who have expressed their great regret for these delays, and the consequent disturbance of the train service. They state that it has been a task of very great difficulty to substitute electric for steam traction on the whole of the District Railway, and on other allied and connected lines; to increase the frequency and speed of the train services; to put into service an entire new equipment of rolling stock, and at the same time to introduce a complete system of automatic signalling, without interrupting the train service for a single day. It is added that the difficulties are being steadily overcome, and that the number of delays has now been greatly reduced. The company explain that the stoppages and delays have been mainly caused by a number of small (remediable) defects, in the mechanical and electrical equipments, and by the necessity of training, by experience, in new work a large number of men in various grades. They are making every effort to remedy the defects, and hope that the train services will soon be worked with no more than the normal percentage of failures, which must occur on every railway on which a train mileage of such density is run.

Freight Rates to South Africa.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the freight rate from the United States of America to South Africa for agricultural machinery is 17s. 6d. a ton, whereas from this country it is 40s. per ton; that the average freight rates from the United States of America is 33⅓ less than the freight charged from this country; whether this has caused South African trade, especially in Cape Colony, to decline by 2½ per cent., whereas for the same period foreign trade with the same Colony has increased by 25 per cent.; whether this is due to the monopoly secured by the shipping ring, particularly the Union-Castle Company; and what action he proposes taking to remove this handicap from British trade with the South African Colonies.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have compared the figures quoted with the information on this subject in the possession of the Board of Trade, and I find that my hon. friend has been misinformed as to the figures he quotes, and the deductions which he draws from them are therefore probably erroneous. I have communicated with the Union-Castle and other lines interested. They say the tariff rates for agricultural machinery are as follows:—

From the United Kingdom.

Cape Town.	Algoa Bay.	East London.	Natal.	Delagoa Bay.
25s.	25s.	32s. 6d.	32s. 6d.	35s.

From United States of America.

25s.	27s. 6d.	30s.	32s. 6d.	40s.

On the whole therefore these rates are in favour of the United Kingdom. The whole question of South African freights is under the consideration of the Government.

Electricity Provisional Orders.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will grant a Return showing the appeals to the Board of Trade in respect of Provisional Orders for electricity purposes by local authorities and companies during the ten years ended March, 1906, and also particulars of the names of local authorities and companies, objects of applications in appeals, dates when made, and decisions of the Board of Trade respecting them.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I shall be pleased to communicate with my hon. friend with the object of meeting his wishes, if possible.

Railway Brakes and Couplings.

Mr. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will take an early opportunity of appointing a Statutory Committee, representing the railway companies, Board of Trade, and railway employees, to examine and select automatic couplings and either-side brakes for railway trucks, and arrange for experiments with such couplings and brakes, in accordance with Section 15, Sub-sections 1, 2, and 3 of The Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, with a view to their adoption.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, Sir, steps will be taken to set up such a Committee at an early date, and I hope it may be possible to constitute it somewhat in the manner suggested.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the possibility of enabling the Committee to test practically designs submitted by railway employees, who necessarily have the best knowledge of what is required, but who in most cases have not the necessary means to enable them to give a practical full-scale demonstration of their inventions?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Of course; that is the object of the Committee.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: Have you the sanction of the Treasury to spend any money on this?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes. I have the sanction of the Treasury to expend a certain sum of money upon practical experiments.

Isle of Dogs.

MR. BROOKE (Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Millwall Dock Company has for a number of years been in the habit of depositing dredged material on land in the Isle of Dogs closely adjacent to inhabited houses; whether, in view of the continual protest made by residents of these houses and the inhabitants of the Isle of Dogs generally against such deposits, as a menace to health, as a source of offensive odours, and a danger to the adjoining property, he will urge upon the Millwall Dock Company their obligation to cease and discontinue these deposits of the dredgings of their docks on the said land; and whether he will consider the desirability of using the opportunity afforded by the Millwall Dock (Superfluous Lands) and London and India Docks, and Millwall Dock Companies (Amalgamation) Bills for making provision to secure this object.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My attention has been called to this matter. I understand that the Company in 1898 expressed their willingness to discontinue the practice of depositing dredged material on the land referred to if detriment to the public health could be shown, but that up to the present time no sufficient evidence in support of the contention that the deposit is a menace to health has been obtained. I have no control over the Company, and I do not think that I could take action with a view of giving effect to the suggestion in the last paragraph of the Question.

Australian Mail Service.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State to the Colonies if he will state what are the arrangements of the Government as to the Australian mail service, and when the present mail contract ceases; and whether the Commonwealth Government have made any arrangements with the Home Government on the subject of the carriage of mails for the future.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. The arrangements are as follows:—Under a contract with the Peninsula and Oriental Company for a mail service to and from India, China and Australia; a fortnightly service is provided by His Majesty's Government to and from Australia; and under a contract with the Oriental Company an alternating fortnightly service in both directions is provided by the Australian Government. Both contracts expire on January 31st, 1908. The Commonwealth Government have made no arrangements with the Home Government on the subject of the carriage of mails after that date.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Am I to understand that the contract with the Peninsula and Oriental Company is entirely paid for by the British Government and that with the Oriental Company by the Commonwealth Government?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: That is substantially the case.

Postal Inquiry.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will give a schedule of the various classes of employees in his Department whose case can be argued before the Select Committee.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is for the Committee to decide what classes of Post Office servants are covered by the reference.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Is it not competent for the Postmaster-General to state what classes he proposes to include in the inquiry?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is for the Committee to interpret the terms of reference.

Lord Stanley's Revision.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state whether the scheme for reorganisation of officers, promised by Lord Stanley, is yet completed, and when it is likely to be made public.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Before framing the scheme of reclassification to which the hon. Members refers, it was necessary to ascertain the comparative cost of living in various localities. This involved prolonged and detailed inquiry, which is not yet completed.

Mr. Donald Murray.

Mr. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if the Electrical Engineer (unestablished) referred to in the Revenue Department Estimates, page 114, is Mr. Donald Murray, the inventor of the Murray telegraph system; and if so, does Mr. Murray receive a salary of £500 from the Government; and further, what steps have been taken to ensure that the experience thus gained shall not be used to the advantage of foreign Governments.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The reply to the first two Questions is in the affirmative. No steps have been taken in the direction indicated. Telegraph administrations all over the world freely place their experience at the disposal of each other; their interest in efficient telegraphy is one and the same.

Sheep Scab in East Yorkshire.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that there is no sheep scab in the East Riding of Yorkshire; and whether he will, therefore, consider the advisability of excluding it from a compulsory sheep-dipping order.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): My noble friend received a deputation from the East Riding County Council on this subject last week, and the representations they made are now under consideration.

Rotherham Pupil Teacher's Dismissal.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has asked the Rotherham Borough Council, or the Committee, for an explanation of their action in connection with the dismissal of Miss Turner, a pupil teacher, for refusing to remove an engagement ring from her finger, at the bidding of Miss Hodge, one of the mistresses; what explanation do they offer for their treatment of this young lady; whether he is aware that, when ordered to remove the ring, Miss Turner stated that she was wearing it with the sanction of her parents, and that she did not recognise the authority of any one else to order her to remove it; whether there is any rule prohibiting the wearing of engagement rings in the pupil teacher centre, Rotherham; and whether he will recommend that Miss Turner be reinstated in her position, where she gave five years service, or that adequate compensation be given her for the loss of her employment.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): I have communicated with the Rotherham Borough Council, and I am informed that technically Miss Turner was not dismissed, but that the borough council took advantage of the clause in her agreement under which the agreement might be terminated by either party at any time, without assigning cause, on the payment of £5. Her wages were also paid up to date. No interference is possible on the part of the Board.

Members' Hair Dressing Room.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that the Members of the House consider that the charges in the hair-dressing department are too high; and whether he can do anything to reduce them.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale): Yes; my attention has been called to this matter and, as I find that that piece of patronage is in my gift, I have been able to secure an immediate reduction of all the charges by one-half.

Dunblane Police Court.

Mr. ERSKINE (Perthshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the burgh of Dunblane has, in respect of their powers under Act of Parliament, set up a police court in the said burgh; whether he is aware that the county council of Perthshire has been applied to for, and has refused to supply, the necessary police assistance (such as it affords to other burgh police courts in the county) to enable the business of the said court to be carried on, with the result that it is impossible to adequately prosecute the police offences that are committed within the said burgh; and whether he will take such steps, by legislation or otherwise, as may be necessary to bring this state of matters to an end.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): I understand that the burgh of Dunblane has set up a police court and has applied for the assistance of the police in connection with it to the county council, but these two authorities have not come to terms on the question. I am advised by the present Lord Advocate, who concurs with an opinion of Lord Advocate Graham Murray, expressed on the same subject, that neither the Lord Advocate nor the Secretary for Scotland has any authority to intervene, and I do not therefore propose to take any further steps in the matter.

Oysterbed Quay, Sneem.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a storehouse is very much required on Oysterbed Quay, at Sneem, county Kerry; and whether in view of the fact that all opposition on the part of the landlord to its erection has been withdrawn, and that, owing to the absence of a storehouse, this quay is very little used, the Congested Districts Board will undertake to erect one.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The Congested Districts Board are aware that a storehouse on Sneem Pier is needed, but as only one steamer trades to Sneem, the Board are of opinion that the owners should provide their own store. The Board, moreover, have been advised that they have no power to give a site for a building on the pier which they have constructed, even if the space were sufficient, which it is not; and they are not the owners of the adjacent land.

Warden Estate, Sneem.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the cause of the delay on the part of the Estates Commissioners in sanctioning the sale of the Warden estate, at Sneem, county Kerry; whether it is intended that the townlands of Druminamore, Druminabeg, and the village of Sneem, will be included in the sale; and whether, in carrying out improvements on the estate, the Commissioners will make a new road at Dereenavarrig, to which the attention of the Congested Districts Board has been frequently called in past years.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners are negotiating with the owners for the purchase of the estate mentioned, but the completion of the purchase is awaiting the decision of the Judicial Commissioners upon a point of law which has been raised. The proposed purchase does not include the townlands of Druminamore, Druminabeg, or the village of Sneem. If the Commissioners should purchase the property, they will consider the question of making the new road referred to.

Commitments for Contempt of Court.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Sligo I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to proceedings in the Land Judge's Court in Dublin, on March 9th, when attachments had been issued against Thomas J. Smith, J.P., Joseph Mulligan, and Terence Fitzpatrick; whether he is aware that the three defendants named were charged with a criminal offence, and pleaded not guilty, and demanded, through their counsel, a trial in accordance with constitutional usage; and whether, seeing that there is no appeal from the order made sentencing the defendants to unlimited terms of imprisonment, and that under that order they may be kept in prison for life unless they plead guilty of a charge which they deny having committed, he proposes to introduce legislation to deal with the matter.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer to my replies to previous Questions on this subject on Thursday last†. I understand that these persons were charged with contempt of court in taking part in an unlawful assembly, the object of which was alleged to be to intimidate the holder of a farm which is under the control of the Court. I am informed that there is no constitutional usage which requires trial by jury to be had in such cases. I understand that the law in these matters is the same in England as in Ireland. There is no intention of introducing separate legislation for Ireland.

MR. DILLON: Then are the Irish Government prepared to acquiesce in a system which allows a Judge on the affidavit of an interested person to imprison a man for life?

MR. BRYCE: I cannot make any statement as to altering the law until I have considered the point. It is the same in both countries.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): It is not administered in the same way.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Will the right hon. Gentleman refer to the declaration of Mr. Gladstone that legislation ought to be introduced on this question.

MR. BRYCE: Yes, if you give me the date.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: October, 1882, in this House.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Does the Lord Chancellor propose to remove Mr. Smith's name from the Commission of the Peace?

[No Answer was returned.]

Seed Potato Supply Loans.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is prepared to recommend that a lower rate of interest than the 3½ per cent. mentioned shall be payable to the Board of Works under the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill.

MR. BRYCE: The rate of interest, namely 3½ per cent., provided for in the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Bill, was fixed when the loans were advanced as being the lowest rate at which the loans could be made without loss. I may, however, remind the hon. Member that the Department of Agriculture has made a grant in aid of these seed supply operations which will cover the interest on all the loans nearly twice over.

Section 7 of the Irish Land Act.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the latest Return disclosing the fact that 2,221 tenants and thirty-eight sub-tenants have been deprived of their tenancies during the year 1905 under Section 7 of the Land Act; and whether, in view of the fact that these persons have lost all right under the various Land Acts passed with a view to settle the Irish land question, the Government will bring in a short Bill during the present session repealing the said section.

MR. BRYCE: The numbers of tenants and sub-tenants upon whom eviction notices under Section 7 of the Land Law Act 1887 were served in the year 1905, are correctly stated in the Question. The great majority of such persons are not ultimately deprived of their tenancies, and do not lose their rights under the various Land Acts. The section quoted provides a right of redemption which may be exercised within a period of six months; and upon the exercise of such power of redemption all rights are restored to the tenant. The numbers of tenants and sub-tenants actually dispossessed from their holdings under the section quoted during the year 1905, were ninety-six and five, respectively, that is, less than 5 per cent. of the number served with eviction notices. I am advised that a repeal of the section might prove to be an injury rather than a benefit to the tenants concerned, seeing that it might involve the actual eviction of tenants who, from any temporary cause, were unable to pay their rents.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1383.

MR. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that many of those who were prominently connected with the enactment of Section 7 have since expressed their strong condemnation of it—for instance, the hon. Member for South Tyrone?

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware of that, but I may say my right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland thinks it very doubtful whether an amendment of the law would really benefit the tenants.

Dr. Ellis's Surcharges.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of Dr. Ellis, the Local Government Board auditor, who has recently surcharged six urban councillors in Newry £1,092, on the grounds that the defaulting rate collector's bond was not in order, and of no use, and that money was lost; and whether, in view of the fact that under the Public Bodies Orders, the auditor is responsible for the correctness and utility of the bonds of the officers, and is provided with a special form (Form 41 G) for that purpose, to be filled up and signed by the auditor, he will state whether he will take steps to set aside this surcharge.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have not yet received the auditor's report on the audit of the accounts referred to. Pending receipt of this report, the Board are not in a position to express an opinion on the case, but it may be pointed out that the Public Bodies Order did not come into force until April 1st, 1905, whereas the surcharge in question was made in respect of the accounts for the previous year.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is this not the gentleman who has been removed from various districts because he is in the habit of making vexatious and illegal surcharges?

MR. BRYCE: I have no information on the point.

Mr. J. M'Inerney of Ennistymon.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the police protection afforded to Mr. John M'Inerney, of Ennistymon; and whether, seeing that Mr. John M'Inerney goes to fairs and markets through West Clare, leaving home early in the morning and coming home late at night, without police protection, and that he travels to his farm fifteen miles from his residence without protection, he will explain why the only place and time that he has police with him is in the streets of Ennistymon from 10 a.m. until 2.30 a.m. the following morning.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that Mr. M'Inerney is not in receipt of constant police protection, but that such protection as may be necessary is afforded to him by police patrols. This form of protection is given both by day and night, in Ennistymon and elsewhere, as necessity arises.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it not the fact that at the last assizes the Judge congratulated the people of the county on its peaceable state?

MR. BRYCE: I believe so.

Commission of National Education for Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the amount voted to defray the expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year ending 31st March, 1906; has the full amount of this Vote been expended; and, if not, can he state what unexpended balance is it estimated will remain at the end of the year.

MR. BRYCE: The net amount voted to defray the expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year ending 31st March, 1906, was £1,391,721, exclusive of grants from the Ireland Development Fund. The Commissioners do not anticipate any considerable unexpended balance, but no statement on the subject can be made until after the 31st March.

Rates on Iron Hay Sheds.

MR. HALPIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the revisors of rateable property in the county of Clare have been instructed to value iron hay-sheds put up by the tenant farmers so as to levy rates off them; and, if so, whether he will issue instructions to the revisors of the county of Clare to discontinue valuing these sheds, in view of the taxation already levied on these tenants.

MR. McKENNA: Under Section 12 of the Valuation (Ireland) Act of 1852 farm out-houses are rateable hereditaments and must therefore be valued for local rating. The valuation is done on the request of the county or urban district councils. Under Section 14 of the same Act, however, these out-houses escape local rates for a period of seven years after they are erected.

Registration of Teachers in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that information respecting the fact of their recognition under certain provisions of the Order in Council establishing a register of teachers, is forwarded to the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, instead of being sent directly to the schools which have applied for such recognition; and can he state the reason for this course of action.

MR. BIRRELL: The practice of the Board is as described. The Board communicate with the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction as to the recognition of the schools, and it seems, therefore, the proper course to announce the results through them.

MR. BOLAND: Is this a new development.

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire.

Annaclone Postal District.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what are the present arrangements for the delivery and despatch of letters in the Annaclone postal district, county Down; and whether, seeing that the district affected by the present system is nearer to Banbridge than Rathfriland, that it is dependent largely on its trade and business relations with the former town, and that a great many letters are addressed with Banbridge instead of Rathfriland for this district, he can say what additional expenditure, if any, would be involved if Banbridge, which is only five miles from Annaclone, was made the head office instead of Newry, which is fourteen miles distant as the letters are now carried.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Inquiry is being made on this subject and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member in due course.

Keadue Telegraph Office.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the Post Office authorities are about to establish a new telegraph office in a public-house in Keadue, county Roscommon; and whether, in view of the Post Office regulations against having an office upon premises licensed for the sale of intoxicants, he can state the reasons for a departure from the regulations in this case; and whether other and more suitable premises cannot be obtained in the village

MR SYDNEY BUXTON: The Post Office at Keadue, to which the telegraph system is about to be extended, is in the licensed premises in which the Post Office business has been conducted for the last twenty-six years. I am not aware of the reasons for which an exception to the usual rule was sanctioned when this office was opened; but as the sub-postmistress is prepared to provide a suitable office with a separate entrance, I do not, under the circumstances, propose to remove the office to other premises.

Lord Dudley and Devolution.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I wish to ask you, Sir, a Question on a matter of order. I wish to ask you whether I would be in order in addressing the following Question to the Leader of the Opposition:—"Whether he would consent now to the publication of the correspondence which took place between him as Prime Minister and Lord Dudley as Viceroy of Ireland, on the question of devolution?"

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question addressed to the Leader of the Opposition by the hon. Member does not relate to any matter or any Bill before this House. I should like to have seen the Question in writing so that I might have given it full consideration, but, having heard it, I should say that it is not a Question that could be asked.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will take cognisance of the Question which, if it had been in order, I would have addressed to him.

The Durst Hop Pool.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that M. H. Durst, of Wheatland, California, exporter of hops for the London market, has formed a corporation, known as the Durst Hop Pool, to control the hop crop of Oregon; and that the Oregon hop-growers employ Chinese labour; and whether he will take steps to prevent this or similar hop pools from destroying the English hop industry, which employs more labour per acre than any other branch of agriculture.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN Stirling Burghs): No, Sir, the Government have no information as to the formation of the Durst Hop Pool. As to Chinese labour I am informed that it is not employed to any extent by the Oregon hop growers, and I have no reason to believe that so far as it may be employed it is otherwise than under free conditions. With regard to the last part of the Question, I am afraid I cannot undertake to embark on a crusade against hop pools in the United States or anywhere else.

Ministers and Company Directorships.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the President of the Board of Education, the Paymaster-General, the Secretary of State for India, the Under-Secretary of State for India, the Under-Secretary of State for War, the Secretary to the Admiralty, the hon. Member for Saffron Walden, a Lord of the Treasury, the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, and Lords Granville and Denman, Lords in Waiting, have been recently directors of public companies, holding directorships of the Canada Life Insurance Company, of the Great North of Scotland Railway, of the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company, of the Royal Bank of Scotland, of the Western Assurance Company, of the London and Provincial Bank, of the National Provident Institution, of the Anglo-Californian Bank, of the Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Company, of the Star Life Assurance Society, of Sir Joseph Causton and Sons, Limited, of the Scarborough Electric Supply Company, of the Artisans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, of Western Mansions, Limited, of Pease and Partners, Limited, of the British Columbia Land and Investment Agency, Limited, of the Wouldham Cement Company, of the Lilleshall Company, Limited, and of the International Tea Company's Stores, Limited; and whether in view of their duties as Ministers of the Crown, he will say whether these Ministers of the Crown have resigned from the above-named companies; and, if so, will he give the date of such resignations.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The condition which was laid down on the formation of the Government was that all directorships held by Ministers must be resigned except in the case of honorary directorships, directorships in connection with philanthropic undertakings, and directorships in private companies. Every member of the Government has either complied with this understanding or is in process of complying with it. I do not think it is necessary to say more except to add that my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India, whose name is mentioned in the Question, has never held a directorship, and the same remark applies to my hon. friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the name of the Civil Lord or the Admiralty appeared in error. It should have been Secretary of the Board of Trade. He asked whether the process of resignation was still in course of being carried out, and, if so, when it would be completed.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know that the process of resigning is complete. Sometimes it is necessary or desirable or convenient to go on until the annual meeting is held, or some occasion of that sort. It is not desirable that these things should be done in an inconvenient way. The purpose will be carried out to the full.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Will the right hon. Gentleman give a list of the directorships in private companies held by members of the Government.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the International Tea Company is a philanthropic society?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should say that depends on the quality of its tea.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask the Prime Minister whether he intends to introduce legislation to give effect to the excellent rule he has laid down, having regard to the fact that among the the members of the late Government no fewer seventy-one company directorships were held.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope that legislation will not be necessary. A good example has been set.

Discussion of Indian Subjects by Parliament.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of placing the salary of the Secretary of State for India on the Estimates, so as to enable this House to challenge by a direct vote any action of the Government of India, or of the Secretary of State, of which it disapproves.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The issue raised is a large and important one involving grave constitutional and legal considerations; and we cannot at present give any pledge or promise on the subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St Augustine's): I wish to ask what business will be taken to-morrow.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that the business to-morrow would be the Second Reading of the Consolidated Fund Bill, and on Thursday he hoped to make the ordinary Motion for the Speaker to leave the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

House of Commons (Procedure). That they give leave to the Viscount Selby to attend in order to his being examined as a Witness before the Select Committee appointed by this House on House of Commons (Procedure), his Lordship consenting.

Sunday Trading. That they have appointed a Committee, consisting of Five Lords, to join with a Committee of this House to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading, and request this House to appoint an equal number of its Members to be joined with the said Lords.

NEW BILLS.

SHOPS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Hobhouse, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Alfred Scott, Mr. Seddon, and Mr. John Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th April, and to be printed. [Bill 111.]

ALLOTMENTS (LONDON) BILL.

"To facilitate the provision of Allotments by the London County Council," presented by Mr. John Benn; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 112.]

PURCHASE OF LAND BILL.

"To provide for the Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Mr. George White; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Branch, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Higham, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Money, Mr. Alfred Scott, and Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards; to be read a second time upon Friday 11th May, and to be printed. [Bill 113.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion on the interruption of Business at this Afternoon's Sitting, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business at this Evening's Sitting.—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I have to ask the leave of the House to introduce a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1900. The Bill which I propose to introduce is based on the report of two or three Committees. The first is the Committee which reported in 1903, Lord St. Helier's Committee, dealing with two or three different matters relating to the mercantile marine; secondly, the Seaman's Wages Committee, which reported last year; and, thirdly, the Committee known as Mr. Bonar Law's Foreign Ships Statutory Requirements Committee, which also reported last year. No attempt is to be made to codify the Merchant Shipping Act, although that is very necessary. An amendment was felt very necessary to bring the merchant shipping laws up to date last year, but owing to the fact that no time was given by the Government the Bill had to be carried through without any amendment at all. This Bill deals with a few of the admitted grievances from which British shipowners and seamen suffer. The first is in reference to the application of our safety regulations to foreign ships. The regulations applicable to British ships may be divided roughly into four parts. One deals with overloading; the second deals with unseaworthiness—the defective condition of hull, machinery, and equipment, and undermanning; the third deals with stowage of grain; and the fourth deals with appliances—life-boats, buoys, and life-belts. There is no doubt at all that these regulations have had the effect of saving life during the years they have been in operation. In 1872 I find that the loss of life in the mercantile marine amounted to 3,533, in 1874 to 4,171, and in 1904, the last year for which we have returns, to 1,113—a very considerable reduction. The loss of life in 1872 was one in sixty-four of those employed in our merchant ships, and it now varies between 1 in 150 and 1 in 220. This is not entirely attributable to legislation with regard to life-saving appliances and with regard to overloading and unseaworthiness. It is due also very largely to the gradual substitution of steam for sailing ships. With regard to the overloading of foreign ships in British ports, under the regulations they may be detained at the present moment if they are overloaded. These are made applicable by the rules of the Board of Trade—in 1876 a clause was introduced into the Act which made it distinctly applicable to foreign ships loading cargo in a British port; but unfortunately owing to the absence of the disc, it was exceedingly difficult to detect what ships were overloaded and what were not, and, if the Board of Trade officials detained a vessel which afterwards on survey was discovered as a matter of fact to be not overloaded, then the Government would be liable to very substantial damages for detention. Unless it was pretty obvious that a foreign ship was overloaded, the Board of Trade officials were naturally very cautious and circumspect and did not care to run the risk of detaining a vessel. Foreign ships could arrive in this country overloaded, and we have had a good many cases. We watched for some months, and reports were made to the Board of Trade. There is a very long list appended to the report on the subject, as an appendix to the evidence of Mr. Howell, of foreign ships overloaded, some to the extent of ten, twelve, and even nineteen inches, arriving in British ports in very dangerous conditions, especially ships engaged in the carrying of ore from Spain and Sweden. The Board of Trade had no right to interfere, because the regulations were not applicable to ships arriving from foreign ports. The same thing applies to unseaworthiness. A foreign ship might arrive in a British port and sail from a British port in a most unseaworthy condition: her hull might be defective and her machinery and equipment might be deficient, but the Board of Trade had no right to intervene at all.

An HON. MEMBER: Both going and coming?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, both going and coming. There is no distinction. If British shipowners found when their ships were condemned as unseaworthy by the Board of Trade officials that it was hardly worth refitting them, if they were too rotten, they generally sold them to foreigners. There was no market for them in this country, and the consequence was that they were sold practically for an old song. I find that last year 78 per cent. of 422,000 tons of British steamers sold to foreign shipowning syndicates, was constructed before 1895, whereas in our own country we added 1,226,000 steam tons to the register of the United Kingdom, 98 per cent. of it being new steamers. Not merely is the initial expenditure less, consequently upon the foreign shipowner getting old, discarded British ships for next to nothing, but the current expenditure of keeping the ship going is less. We have no regulations compelling them to keep up the standard, which will cost a considerable sum of money. Consequently the competition to which British shipowners were subjected by these vessels was grossly unfair. The initial capital was less, the expenditure of keeping them going was less, and not merely that, but they might come to this country considerably overloaded, probably over 200 or 300 tons in some cases. We, on the other hand, compelled our ships to be up-to-date, to conform to our regulations with regard to life-saving appliances; and shipowners not unnaturally complained that the competition was exceedingly unfair. Seeing that these laws were passed in the interests of humanity, in the interests of saving life—and that, after all, is not a national, but an international obligation—we felt that it was grossly unfair to impose obligations of this character upon our shipowners in the interests of humanity, and at the same time to allow foreigners to come into our ports and break our own laws. Therefore it is the intention of the Government to make these rules and regulations applicable to foreign ships, whether they sail from British ports or whether they arrive in British ports. In order to make them effective, it is perfectly clear you cannot throw the risk upon the Board of Trade surveyor of saying whether the ship is overloaded or not. It is too much of a risk for him to undertake at the present moment, and the result is that a very considerable number escape. Therefore it is intended that after a certain date—two or three years will be given to enable the foreign shipowners who trade regularly with this country to make up their minds—foreign shipowners must subscribe to the conditions of the same disc to enable any one to see whether the ship is overloaded or not. After that date the foreign ship cannot be overloaded whether coming or going, she must be in a perfectly seaworthy condition, and coming and going she must be subject to the same regulations with regard to life-saving appliances. The only other point is with respect to stowage of grain. In some trades it is exceedingly dangerous unless you stow grain very carefully, for in rough weather the grain may be shifted and give the ship a list, rendering her very dangerous, and there are cases where the vessel has turned turtle as the result of the shifting of grain in rough weather. We have introduced regulations for the very careful stowage of grain in some parts of the ocean, more especially in the North Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Black Sea, to prevent accidents of that character, but they are not applicable to foreign ships. Thirty-six foreign ships of this character were watched the year before last, and this is the result. In nineteen cases the precautions which had been taken against the shifting of grain were practically equivalent to ours. It is not our idea to impose our regulations on foreign ships if their own are in the main equivalent to ours. In nineteen cases they were practically equivalent to ours, in five they were described as fair, and in twelve as more or less indifferent. In those cases the ships would be subjected to the same regulations with regard to the stowage of grain as our ships. The same thing applies to life-saving appliances. I do not think that the foreigner can complain. After all, he is treated very well in this country—very much to our advantage. We buy nothing from him that we do not want. There is no compulsory purchase of foreign goods. We have given him an open market and open harbours, and we treat him exactly as we treat our own ships. The Government do not propose to impose upon him any obligations which our own ships have not been subjected to for years, very much to their own benefit. It is to be made plain that their ships shall enjoy the same rights, privileges, liberties, immunities and exceptions in matters of navigation as are or may be enjoyed by ours. That is really what you find in all navigation agreements; they simply claim the same privileges and rights as native subjects enjoy.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): What will you get in return?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is all we propose to do. We propose to put them under exactly the same obligations, and, after all, we have a sort of national obligation. Up to the present we have exacted a standard in the matter of protecting life at sea. It is not a fancy standard. It is something we have subjected our own ships to for years. Other countries are gradually approximating to ours. Germany is getting closer year by year and France is improving. It is not the great countries we complain so much about. Therefore I think it would assist if we not merely set this standard for our own ships, but insisted upon its being applicable to every ship that trades with our ports. After all, our carrying trade is the greatest in the world. There is a real inducement for foreign shipowners to follow the very excellent example set by us in this respect. So much for that part of the matter. I think I have dealt with grain stowage, life-saving apparatus, seaworthiness, and load line. There is one thing before I dispose of this part of the Bill I should like to say. It is obviously impossible to apply rigidly our rule to foreign countries who have got regulations of their own that are practically equivalent to ours, and therefore we take power where we are satisfied that the regulations of any particular country are substantially equal to ours to except by Order in Council all vessels of that country from our rules with regard to loading. At present, if a foreign emigrant ship calls at a British port to take emigrants on board, she is subject to all the emigration regulations of this country, but if she is an emigrant ship calling for passengers she is not liable or subject to our passenger regulations. Now I think the House will agree that if they are already made liable to our emigration regulations, they should also be subject to our passenger regulations with regard to overcrowding, and more particularly with regard to life-saving appliances if they are going to take passengers. There again these regulations are in the interests of humanity.

I now come to deal with a subject of much greater complexity and difficulty and one which has caused me much more anxiety. It is the question of foreign seamen. I confess when I first looked into the figures I was really very startled. In 1870 we had 200,000 British seamen in British ships, and 18,000 foreign seamen and hardly any lascars; I will give the lascars separately because their case is very different from that of foreign seamen. In 1904 the number of British sailors had fallen from 200,000 to 176,000, and the number of foreign sailors had increased from 18,000 to 39,000. The foreigner had increased from 9 per cent. to 22 per cent. Whereas we had hardly any lascars in 1870—I believe they began about 1886—you had lascars before that but not in great numbers—they have now increased to 42,000 odd. I confess, looking at these figures, they are rather startling, and in the evidence taken on the subject suggestions have been put forward, sometimes by representatives of the seamen, and sometimes by others, that the presence of many foreigners in our British mercantile marine is attributable to the fact that the shipowner can get foreign seamen at a lower rate of pay and that he is much more amenable to discipline. But I confess, after going into it very carefully—not merely reading evidence, but seeing shipowners and making inquiries—that I do not think there is substantial ground for that suggestion. I think shipowners have no alternative. They have taken foreign sailors because there is not an adequate supply of British sailors for the purpose of meeting the enormous and growing demands of our mercantile marine. The growth of the mercantile marine has been so amazing. It was quite impossible for the supply to keep pace with it. In 1870 you had 5,500,000 tons and in 1904 that had gone up to 10,250,000 tons, almost double in thirty-five years. The number of men employed in 1870 was 218,000 and in 1904 259,000. The Navy has practically taken the cream of our men engaged in seafaring life. In 1868 there were 64,000 men in our Navy, and last year we took a Vote for 129,000 men, double the number. Last year one out of every thirty-six of the adult population of this country was engaged in a seafaring occupation, and supposing you brought in a Bill to stop every foreign seaman being engaged on British ships you would ruin the British mercantile marine. I do not despair of being able to do something with the assistance of shipowners, who seem to me just as anxious as anybody to get British seamen into British ships, and we are considering all sorts of schemes at the present time. Sir Alfred Jones has been down to Swansea, and he has suggested that in each port you should set up some arrangement for the purpose of training British sailors. I think that is an admirable idea, and I think if the Corporation in every seaport town in the United Kingdom were to take the matter up, in a short time shipowners would not be driven as they are now to foreign seamen for the purpose of manning their great fleets. That, however, is a thing we could not possibly introduce into an Act of Parliament at the present stage.

That is with regard to that particular branch. Let me put another point before I dismiss it. I have not disposed altogether of foreign seamen. A good deal of British shipping trading between foreign ports never touch the home ports. The ships have hardly been at home since construction. We have 54 per cent. of the carrying trade of the world. There has not been anything like it in history. It is not merely that we carry two-thirds of our own trade, but 54 per cent. of the trade of the whole world, and therefore, a good number of British ships trade between foreign ports and never touch home ports except once every four years for the purpose of classification at Lloyds. You cannot get British sailors to remain on board ships of that kind. You may get your captain and officers, but you cannot get your British sailor to live altogether in a foreign port. If you prevent shipowners from engaging foreign sailors you stop the whole of that international trade, and that is why I have come to the conclusion that British shipowners are not altogether to blame for the enormous increases of foreign sailors in British ships. They have no alternative. I believe from what I have seen that they are anxious and will assist in the future to get British sailors into British ships. It is said that there is really a great danger to the safety of the country, but that is not the view of the Admiralty. I am not a great authority on armaments, but it really seems to be the view of men who know about it that there is no real substantial danger. They say that when war comes you would not draw so very much from the mercantile marine, because you would want them to carry on the trade. I would remind hon. Members who think otherwise that, as I am told, in Nelson's fleet 22 per cent. of the men were foreigners. That is not the state of things now. So much for the pure foreigner. Now I come to the lascars. There has been a decrease during the last two or three years, so far as the foreigner is concerned, and I am inclined to believe that that decrease is a permanent thing, because the conditions are improving in foreign ships, and the greater the improvement the more foreign countries will be able to absorb their own seafaring population. But when you come to the lascar there is a continual increase. The lascar, however, is a Britisher. [A LABOUR MEMBER: Like the Chinaman!] You cannot make a Britisher of him merely for the sake of bragging of the extent of your dominions, and then the moment he asks for a share of your privileges say "You are a foreigner." That is not fair; it is a question of fair play. [A LABOUR MEMBER: And wages!] The lascars themselves sent a petition which is rather interesting. They are very much concerned about their accommodation. They said—

> "We are told that in the Parliament of England sits a gentleman of the name of Havelock Wilson Sahib. He has urged there lately, as he has often done in the past, that we should be given more space. We beseech your Lordships to tell him that his benevolence will be our bane; that as we have done him no wrong, and if he really wishes us well he will have the mercy to spare us. Should he, however, pursue us with his attentions, we are sure that after this humble representation of ours, the other members of the great Assembly will refuse to listen to him."

The lascars came before Lord St Helier's Committee and I am assured by those who sat on that Committee—and they are very competent judges—that no more intelligent witnesses came before them than these fellow-British subjects of ours. I am told, on all hands, that the lascars are very intelligent, exceedingly sober, hard-working and skilful, and in an emergency they are courageous men. Let me put in another word for the lascar. The lascar is an hereditary sailor. He belongs to a sailor caste. He is bound by the rules of his caste to pursue the trade his ancestors have pursued from time immemorial, from the days of the Flood. Well, now, what do they say? They had a considerable coasting trade along the coast of India. We came along and deprived them of their livelihood and they say that the least we can do is to allow them to take part in running our great mercantile marine. I am with them heartily. The British mercantile marine cannot do without them.

There is a real objection in the case of the foreign seaman because he very often endangers the safety of the ship through not being able to understand the words of command. There have been a good many cases of that character lately. If the House will allow me I will refer to one or two of them. There were cases which were tried at Cardiff. There were quite a number of wrecks, and an inquiry was held at Cardiff by a very competent and experienced Judge, and in at least three of the cases it was shown that a majority of the seamen on board were foreigners. This is the judgment of the Court in one case—the case of the "Ordovician."

"It is not within the province of this court to express an opinion as to policy, expedience, or necessity of employing foreign seamen on British ships, nor to institute any comparison between British and foreign seamen. But the Court deems it a duty to direct attention to the fact that this is the third wreck inquiry held here within a month, in which the deck hands have been chiefly foreign seamen with no knowledge of the English language.

"In the recent 'Rowtor' inquiry it was proved that a Spaniard who could neither speak nor understand English was at the wheel when the vessel stranded, and the court found that either bad steering or a certain other cause mentioned was a contributory cause of the stranding.

"In the inquiry into the loss of the "Bavaria"—which involved the loss of many lives—the only deck hands that gave evidence were Russians who were entirely ignorant of the English language; and this court was satisfied that they made a false imputation on the reputation of the master, who had lost his life in trying to save his vessel."

In the case of the "Bavaria," it was shown that foreign seamen managed to get hold of the life-boat, and having got on board with only one Britisher a Russian cut the rope; those in the life-boat were saved, but all the rest of the hands sank. In another case—the "Ordovician"—a Greek who could speak no English was at the wheel, and a Greek who could speak no English was at the look-out; also bad steering conduced to the casualty. There is overwhelming evidence that the lives of men engaged at sea are endangered by the fact that you have seamen on board who do not understand the English language, who consequently do not understand the word of command, and who, especially in moments of emergency, are absolutely worthless for that reason. The Government are of opinion that, although they cannot bring in a Bill to exclude foreign seamen from British ships, at any rate they ought to introduce into the Bill a provision that no foreign seamen, with the exception of British subjects, shall be engaged on board British ships, unless in the opinion of a competent Board of Trade officer they are capable of understanding the word of command in the English language. I put it entirely on the ground of safety. There is nothing further that I wish to say about the foreign seamen, except this. I earnestly hope that British shipowners will assist us in trying to bring into existence or to promote some sort of scheme whereby the undoubted deficiency in the supply of British seamen can be, somehow or other, made good. I am quite certain that a good deal can be done by a system of apprenticeship. The firm with which my hon. friend the Member for Dewsbury is connected—than whom there is no man in this House more competent in matters affecting the merchant service—have a regular system of apprenticeship, which is working admirably. About 50 per cent. of the boys who are apprenticed eventually stick to their posts, and I think that that is about as high a percentage as you can really expect. I believe that the experiment which has been made such a success in my hon. friend's firm could be made a success in any other firm if a real effort were made. Here you have 40,000 berths at present filled by foreigners, according to the shipowners, because

Britishers cannot be obtained. There would be an opening for some philanthropic trade unionist or tariff reformer who wished to find employment for British hands.

Then I come to another branch of the Bill, and that is in regard to food and the scale of provisions. At the present moment there is no statutory scale of provisions enforced upon shipowners. There is something which is known as the Board of Trade scale, but it is not a Board of Trade scale at all; it is purely a skeleton which the Board of Trade expect each owner to fill up for himself, but too often the skeleton has done the part of a real living scale. The "Board of Trade scale" is a sort of traditional scale: it is very little beyond salt meat, biscuits, tea, and sugar. It would be unfair to shipowners if I were to suggest that that is the scale of provisions which they give to their sailors. It is not. There is a conflict of evidence on this point; but I should say that the vast majority of shipowners not merely improve upon that scale, but improve upon it very considerably. Some shipowners, more especially on the great liners and the great tramp ships, provide as generous a scale as could be put into an Act of Parliament—I should say a better scale than you could possibly put into an Act of Parliament. But at the same time there is no doubt of this—that a very considerable minority of sailing-ship owners and tramp-ship owners do provide a scale for their seamen which is not much better, if at all, than this meagre, monotonous, miserable scale of salt beef, biscuits, tea, and sugar. I think that that is not the sort of thing which ought to be allowed. We have had considerable evidence with regard to desertions. The House will, I am sure, be surprised to know that in the course of a single year the desertions from the British mercantile marine amount to 28,000. According to some of the evidence, the desertions are due to a large extent to the monotony, the poverty, and the lack of variety of the food scale in some of the sailing ships. Another set of witnesses said that the difficulty which had been found in inducing men and boys to join the mercantile marine was very largely attributable to the fact that the food scale did not commend itself in many instances to the British working man. All that we say is this. The great majority of shipowners supply their sailors with excellent food, good in quality, admirable in quantity, and excellent as far as variety is concerned, taking into account that, after all, the sea is the sea, and that you cannot go out every morning and buy fresh meat and so on. Taking all these things into account, the vast majority of British shipowners do their duty by their seamen; and all that we say is that it is no reflection upon a trading community to introduce a law or a regulation that forces the recalcitrant members of that community to live up to the standard, as it were, of the majority of their fellow-traders. That is all that we do here. We say to these men who do not provide their sailors with the kind of food which ought to be given to them, "You must, at any rate, come up to the average of the British shipowners." There has been a great deal of complaint under this head. I do not want to read out too much of the evidence, but there is a case for introducing some sort of minimum scale of provisions. I will not refer merely to the evidence of seamen; the evidence given by sailors is practically unanimous on the point. But the evidence given by independent Board of Trade witnesses corroborates the evidence given by the sailors to a very large extent. There is the evidence given by Mr. Longford, who says that the cooking on sailing ships is, as a rule, wholly uncharacterised by skill. When we are so anxious to reduce the number of foreigners on our British ships and to increase the number of British sailors, one thing to do is to make the merchant service as attractive as we can, and the first condition undoubtedly is to provide fairly good food. The life of the seaman is a pretty hard one. His accommodation is cramped under the best of conditions; there is a kind of food which in the best service in the world he would have to get accustomed to; there is the absence from home, and the deprivation of all the comforts of home life. Under these circumstances it is not too much to ask that a minimum scale of provisions should be provided for these men, and the Government have decided in this Bill to have a minimum scale. But I do not think you can have a scale which you can rigidly enforce—a scale of so many pounds of this a week and so many ounces of that. It is quite impossible rigidly to enforce a scale in every particular. The only thing you can do is not to set up a scale, but to set up a standard, and the minimum scale which we introduce into this Bill is not so much a scale as a sort of standard to which we shall ask shipowners to conform. If a sailor complains that he has not had a fair share of the things provided in the scale and the shipowner can prove that he has had substitutes which are equivalent, then the sailor will be non suited. I think that that is fair on the whole; it is better for the sailor and better for the shipowner. I need not say that in many ports it would be quite impossible for the shipowner to provide the ship with some article included in the scale, and then he would be able to provide some substitute.

Then it follows almost as a matter of course that if we have a minimum scale of provisions we must have some provision with regard to cooking. The Committee recommended that the cooks should be certificated. I am told that the evidence is overwhelming that the cooking is bad as a rule, and that the cook is generally a man who is not fit for anything else. The result is that shipowners do not get justice done to them because of the badness of the cooking. The provisions which come before the sailors are dressed up in such a way as to look very much worse than they really are. Therefore we have decided to incorporate the recommendation of the Committee, and to say that cooks must go through some course of training. We give two years, so that all those who have been in the service two years will get their certificates as a matter of course; therefore, for some time sailors will have to put up with a good deal of bad cooking. My own opinion is that when you get these certificated cooks the shipowners themselves will feel that it is so much easier to attract and obtain a good class of men because of the excellence of the food, that they will infinitely prefer the certificated man to the experienced but inexpert cook of olden times. I do not think there is anything for shipowers to complain of in that. I have consulted them in regard to the minimum scale, and while they agree on the whole, they do not quite agree with the minimum scale we have suggested, but we think that we have struck a very fair compromise between the scale suggested by the sailors and that to which the Shipping Federation were prepared to agree. I think that on the whole our scale is not an extravagant one. Whenever I have put it to a shipowner he has always told me that his scale is better than that; therefore he cannot complain: he is always thinking of somebody else, not himself. But I think the standard in these matters ought to be set by the better class of shipowners. In their own interest and in the interest of the trade, the excellent example which they have set for forty years but which has not been followed by others ought to be enforced by Act of Parliament, and that is why we have introduced this provision into the Bill.

We are also going to extend the inspection of provisions. As hon. Members who are acquainted with the Merchant Shipping Act know perfectly well, provisions are inspected on vessels going to certain parts of the world—round Cape Horn, round the Cape of Good Hope, and through the Suez Canal; but there is no inspection of the provisions on vessels going to any other part of the globe. If you inspect the provisions in the one case, it is necessary to inspect them in the other, because, on the whole, the worst-provisioned ships are not those which go these long voyages. We are not going to make the inspection compulsory; we are going to say that the Board of Trade inspector may inspect provisions in every case—that he shall have the right to do so. A good many shipowners have told me that they regard this as a protection to themselves, as very often the store-keeper is to blame for palming off inferior stores upon the shipowner. That is what I am told by shipowners, at any rate, and they think the provision will act as a guarantee as to the quality of the food.

Then there is another thing. I am sorry to weary the House with all these details, but I want to explain the whole Bill. We are going to substitute new regulations for those which are found in some of the schedules of the old Acts. A good many of those regulations, with regard to the emigrant ships and the carrying of cattle, and so forth, are hopelessly antiquated; they were made for a state of things which does not at all obtain at the present day. In 1854, our ships were chiefly of wood and iron; they are now of steel; in 1854, our sailing ships were 4,000,000 tons and our steam only 300,000; in 1904, and it is going up every year, our steam had gone up to 8,750,000, and our sailing ships were only 1,800,000. It is quite clear that regulations applicable to the old days of sailing ships, when steam was only an experiment, would be inapplicable when steam is everything and the sailing ship is a declining and decaying quantity. Not only that, but in the old days you had not the huge mammoth concerns which you have now. For instance, in those days you had a regulation like this: you are not allowed to carry in an emigrant ship more than ten head of large cattle, including horses and asses. All that sort of thing is hopelessly inapplicable to the present state of our shipping, and what we propose is this. It is a great mistake, I think, to put into an Act of Parliament rigid rules which require another Act of Parliament before they can be altered. It is very difficult to carry Acts of Parliament nowadays, under any scheme, with the present congestion of business. That applies to the simplest Act of Parliament, even when you have the assent of practically the whole House—and that is a thing you cannot always get. One man raises his hat, and his hat is more potent than the voices of the remaining 669 of his fellow members; he simply has to object and the Bill is stopped. Therefore, it is inconvenient to require an amending Act of Parliament whenever a new regulation seems to be necessary to meet the changing circumstances of our mercantile marine. In ten or twenty years there may be as great changes in our mercantile marine as have taken place during the last twenty years. Who can foresee what may happen? There may be a totally different state of things existing, and what we want is to be able, by means of an Order in Council, if necessary, to introduce regulations applicable to the changing circumstances of the hour, without having to have constant resort to the House of Commons to obtain sanction for every change that may bo required. That is what we propose. We propose to abolish these schedules and to substitute for them regulations of that character.

Another thing that we propose to do is this. It is obviously impossible for shipowners under every condition to conform absolutely to every regulation made by

the Board of Trade or laid down by an Act of Parliament. Circumstances are sometimes too strong for them; they have to carry on their business under very trying conditions. There is at present, in the Act of 1894, a sort of dispensing power. Where a shipowner has on the whole done his best to what the regulations demand of him, there is a power to dispense with the strict enforcement of the letter of the regulation—but it is only in certain circumstances. We propose to include in this Bill a rather wider dispensing power under which the Board of Trade may dispense with the strict enforcement of regulations of this character where it is perfectly clear that the shipowner has done everything the circumstances would allow to conform to the regulations or the law.

Another thing is this, and I hope this will be my last point. It is proposed to give power to the Board of Trade to set up Advisory Committees for the purpose of consultation with regard to regulations. The Board of Trade, in the last few years more especially, have set up Advisory Committees for the purposes of consultation in regard to load lines, safety appliances, and all sorts of things in regard to which the law has laid obligations upon our mercantile marine, and almost without exception those committees have proved to be of the greatest possible assistance to the Board in arriving at decisions satisfactory to all parties concerned. After all, no one wants to harass our great mercantile marine in the conduct of its business; but it must be subject to these regulations for the safety of human life or the protection of the sailor, whose guardian we are. But I think it is fair that the men who are interested, who have special knowledge and experience in matters of this character, should be consulted, and I propose, if this clause is carried, at once to invite gentlemen representing the various interests to form an Advisory Committee to assist the Board of Trade in framing these new regulations. They may also assist with regard to the food scale; there may be reason to vary that from time to time. In matters of this and other kinds such a Committee would be of undoubted assistance to the Board of Trade in framing regulations which would work satisfactorily.

There are other provisions which I will not stop now to explain, dealing with the title of ships to be registered—the Board of Trade will require proof that a ship is entitled to be registered as a British ship, because it is at any rate suggested that there are frauds at the present time—the bringing of certain rules in the Act of 1894 up to date, the property of seamen dying on board ship abroad, desertion and so forth; but I think that, on the whole, I have outlined the main provisions of the Bill. After the Second Reading I shall ask the House to refer the Bill to the Committee on Trade, where I hope, and I have no doubt that it will, be freely criticised. But I should be sorry if the Government were to bring to bear the pressure of their Whips to force the Committee to any conclusion against its will. For my part, I shall throw the Bill on the mercy of the Committee, as I think it is a great mistake to make every detail of a Bill a Government matter, and I trust that when it emerges from the Committee it will be a Bill which will be of benefit to all concerned in our mercantile marine—the greatest the world has ever seen.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I wish to say that we have listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speech with intense interest. No apology was needed from him for detaining the House so long as he did. It was not only an interesting speech, but I think it will prove to be a memorable speech. It marks a stage on the road which leads away from the high and dry theory of free trade. I noticed the anxious care which the right hon. Gentleman took from time to time to assure us that all this interference on the part of the State was solely in the interest of human life and the safety of human limb. Did it occur to him whilst framing this interesting piece of legislation that the result might have a protective value? Has it never occurred to him either that, by interfering as much as he does interfere, he may, by putting disabilities on the freedom of trade in one country, be imposing disabilities upon those who compete with our trade? We have heard from a member of this Government — from one of the great protagonists of free trade—that some kinds of competition can be grossly unfair. And why—I quote the right hon. Gentleman's words:—"Why are British shipowners subjected to grossly unfair competition?" Because labour legislation, and very proper labour legislation, places some restrictions upon British shipowners which do not apply to the owners of foreign vessels who compete with us. How far is the President of the Board of Trade prepared to go on this path? We welcome his first footsteps along it. The salutary regulations of the Board of Trade are no doubt restricted so far as the shipowners are concerned. It costs them more to make a profit under these regulations than it costs shipowners who are not subjected to them. What about the Board of Trade regulations which apply to railways? The goods which come on a ship which is allowed to be unseaworthy come over a railway which is not subject to the regulations which apply to our railways. Is he prepared to say that notice will be taken of the fact that the platforms may be as short as you please on the railways of a foreign country?

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: They do not run in our country.

MR. WYNDHAM: But I presume the goods come partly by rail and partly by ship. Some regulations are to be imposed with respect to the sea-borne part of the voyage, but the railway part is a matter we need not take into account. But I do not want to discourage the President of the Board of Trade. We cannot expect his progress to be very rapid, but it is significant. Then he apologised almost to the Labour Party for not legislating directly at this stage against the employment of foreign seamen. We may hope for that in another year or two, when the education of the right hon. Gentleman has proceeded at the hands of the Labour Party, and then perhaps legislation will take direct notice of the fact that foreign seamen compete, and compete seriously, with our British mariners. The right hon. Gentleman says that if they got rid of foreign seamen they would ruin the mercantile marine. There is very little applause for that sentiment from hon. Gentlemen who sit below the gangway on the Opposition side. And so now the right hon. Gentleman is going to perform one of those manœuvres to which the orthodox is sometimes driven. The foreign seaman is to compete with the British seaman, but not unless he knows what starboard and larboard mean. And so a little incidental protection is given, for which no free trader, however orthodox, may have cause to blush. We do not complain only that foreign seamen are ignorant of our language, but we complain that some foreign captains and mates have too much knowledge of our coasts; and it is a matter to us of intense importance that now you are looking into this business you should see that the British pilot, who goes through an expensive training to take out a certificate, is not robbed of the fruits of his industry by foreigners, even though they do know our language, which they have studied in our estuaries and channels. Then the President of the Board of Trade went on very effectively to say that seamen ought to be properly fed—that the Board of Trade scale was a skeleton at their feast, and so forth. But he was going to deal with this matter very cautiously, even in respect of British seamen. I have got one Question to ask him: is he going to look after the meals of the seamen on foreign ships which compete with British ships?

* Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Which?

Mr. WYNDHAM: In foreign ships.

* Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Name one.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I do not see the force of the remark.

* Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: It makes all the difference in the world. If the right hon. Gentleman will name a foreign country that has not got a minimum scale, I will answer him.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman seek to establish equality in that respect? He has told us, so far as unseaworthiness and over-loading go, that he is going to apply to foreign vessels which come to our ports the regulations which apply to British vessels. I merely asked him whether, when he was arranging for the British mariner's meals, he would also see that the mariner on the foreign vessel had as good a meal? Why have equality in respect of over-loading and unseaworthiness if the foreign competitor is allowed to economise on the meals taken on the competing vessel?

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The United States of America have a much higher minimum scale than I propose to introduce here. France has got a minimum scale, so has Germany—or at any rate at its principal seaports—and Denmark, Sweden, and practically all the foreign countries in the world except ours.

Mr. WYNDHAM: What I asked the right hon. Gentleman was—and I repeat the question—whether he will see that our scale is not superior to the scales of other countries. I now come to the last part of the speech, to which I invite the serious attention of the House. You cannot pick and choose amongst these regulations by saying some insure safety of life and limb. If once you begin to interfere with freedom of trade you have abandoned free trade, and you must take a general view of the whole facts of your interference with that trade, and so the right hon. Gentleman will discover. But when I ask him whether in respect of his regulations as to food he will see that equality is maintained, he is not in a position to answer me, because he is going to give up his power, as I understand, in a large measure to such counsels as he may receive from advisory boards.

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: No.

Mr. WYNDHAM: He is going to withdraw the power from this House, and that is a matter of immense importance, and even on the first bringing in of the Bill we cannot afford to pass it over without some solemn word of warning. As I understand it, these regulations and schedules are to be changed by Order in Council. That is a constitutional change of grave moment, and although it would not be proper at this stage of the Bill to express any opinion upon that, still I think the right hon. Gentleman must be warned that to withdraw questions of this kind, in which the public is more interested perhaps now than in any other questions, from discussion in this House and to reserve to a bureaucracy the power of altering conditions of labour on

British ships is a grave constitutional question; and when, in addition, you withdraw the power from this House and transfer it to a Government Department, and say that the head of the Department is going to reserve to himself a right of dispensation, and that certain ships which find favour with high Government officials are not to be interfered with, and that others not so fortunate are to be interfered with, that is a power of dispensation of which our ancestors in this country have always been jealous, and of which we shall be jealous when the Bill is brought in.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down gave us, I think, a very humorous speech. I did not expect that he would have dealt with this very serious question in that way, and I fail to see how he could with reason work in the question of tariff reform. However, it is quite evident that hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side, whenever they can put in a word to bolster up tariff reform intend to do so. There was only one serious point on which, I think, the right hon. Gentleman touched, and that was the last one of all, in which he dealt with the subject of advisory committees. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover that that is a very serious and a very dangerous proposal, because I can imagine that a Liberal Government might make very liberal regulations, and in the course of time we might have a change of Government, and I can imagine a Conservative Government being very ready to alter the regulations to suit the convenience of some of their numerous friends. Therefore it would not, in my opinion, be to the advantage of the seamen. Something of the kind has been going on during the past twelve months with regard to load line regulations. By Order in Council, the Board of Trade are empowered to make certain alterations, and within five years the shipowners without coming before the House of Commons, without the matter being discussed or adopted in the House of Commons in any shape or form, have had two goes at the load line, with the result that ships are now carrying more cargo than they carried previously; and only two days ago the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had to sanction certain regulation that had already been practically adopted by the late Government or the late President of the Board of Trade, which regulations have not been submitted to this House, with the result that shipowners are now able to load their ships deeper than they could before those regulations came into operation. Therefore I think the right hon. Gentleman did score a point with regard to Advisory Committees. If the Government would make the Committees equal in representation—if they would give the seamen, and shipmasters, and officers the same representation on the Committee as the shipowners — then I am sure that the seamen and the officers would certainly be able to hold their own. But I have had twenty-six years experience of Advisory Committees, and I generally find that they are composed of shipowners, insurance brokers, who are largely interested in shipping property, and a number of other people interested in ships, and then, as a kind of makeweight, they throw on a seamen or a fireman, who is practically helpless, and whose voice exerts no influence on the Committee. If the Advisory Committee gives equal representation for all parties, then I would not say that the proposal would be so dangerous. With regard to the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, I desire in the name of the seamen of this country to thank him and the Government for making one step forward in the right direction. I always believe in the policy of taking all you can get and then asking for more. The proposals of the right hon. Gentleman do not satisfy me by any means. Take the whole of his proposals and they amount to very little indeed. Certainly there are one or two very important points. First of all with regard to the application of English regulations to foreign ships. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover has an idea that by adopting what the Government now propose we are taking a step in the direction of protection. May I assure him that the law has been the same for the last twenty years, and under it foreign ships are now subjected to the English law with regard to the carrying of deck loads of timber to English ports in the winter months. That law has been in operation for over twenty years, so that it is not a new principle, but simply a matter of understanding the principle which has been recognised for many years. The same with regard to the loading of ships. We have always had the power to interfere with foreign ships when loading in British ports, but as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out very clearly—as I think every hon. Gentleman interested in shipping will understand—there is the responsibility of the officer detaining a ship which has no mark or anything to guide him; and it might turn out that the ship was not overladen, and then the owner would be entitled to heavy damages. Therefore it is necessary to have the load line on the side of the vessel, so that at a glance the Board of Trade officer may be able to satisfy himself whether or not the ship is all right and in proper trim. I cannot see that this has anything at all to do with free trade or protection. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is fair trade.] Well, we will allow it to be that, but it is a question of the protection of life and limb, and it is not a question of giving British ships any advantage. We are simply asking that the same law which applies to a British vessel shall apply to a foreign vessel in our own ports. I do not know whether my right hon. friend intends this Bill to apply to ports outside the United Kingdom—I mean to our Colonies. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will seriously consider this point.

* MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I cannot.

* MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: The right hon. Gentleman says that he cannot do this.

* MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I cannot legislate for the Colonies.

* MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Some of the Colonies are in advance of our own law upon this question; Australia and New Zealand, especially, are well ahead of us. I see no reason, however, why the right hon. Gentleman should not apply this condition to India, because the Imperial Merchant Shipping Act is bound to have an effect upon all ships trading in Indian ports. I do not think there is any question about that. I think the proposal of the Government to bring foreign ships coming into British ports under our regulations with regard to life-saving appliances, loading and the load line, is a step in the right direction. With regard to the President of the Board of Trade's remarks about foreigners and lascars, I am sorry that I cannot follow him—in fact, I do not agree with him at all. First as regards the foreigners. The right hon. Gentleman said that as far as the figures he had got went, the number of foreigners on board British ships was 40,000; but if my right hon. friend was to put another 20,000 on the top of that, I think he would be nearer the mark, because it must be borne in mind that there are hundreds and thousands of foreigners who have British names, and as a matter of fact, claim to be Britishers. I have seen a foreigner who could scarcely speak a word of our language sign an English name, and he told the British officer in charge that he was a native of Penarth. It must, therefore, be taken for granted that, in addition to the number mentioned by the President of the Board of Trade, there are a number of other foreign seamen. I wish it to be understood that I raise no objection to foreign seamen. I do not object to any man on the ground of his nationality or his colour, but what I do say is that foreign seamen have no right to be given employment which they are not competent to perform. Again, it is not right in principle that foreign seamen should be used for the purpose of lowering the conditions of employment of our own men in our own country. I have given a good deal of consideration and thought to this question for many years, and I do not agree with my right hon. friend when he says that the reason why the foreigner has been brought in is because the shipowner is unable to get British seamen. Let me draw a distinction for the moment between the sailor and the fireman. We are always hearing a good deal about the boy sailor. I wish to speak about the fireman, because it must be borne in mind that the firemen on board British steamers are more numerous than sailors. I think I am right in stating that there are a much larger number of firemen than sailors employed under present conditions. Therefore, I do not see the force of always talking about taking apprentices to create boy sailors. In my opinion the stokers ought to be the great question for us to consider on board ship. The President of the Board of Trade appeared to think that there has been a

great increase in the mercantile marine, and that in consequence the supply of seamen has not kept up to the demand. I would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that we have less sailors now than we had twenty-five years ago. I may say that twenty-five years ago the number of sailors in the mercantile marine was over 300,000, and now there are not more than 240,000. The reason of it is that there has been a great change from sailing ships to steam ships, and therefore the fireman has come in to take the place of a large number of the sailors and deck hands who have been displaced. But it is nonsense in my opinion to say that the shipowner has been obliged to resort to the employment of foreigners because he could not get Britishers; that is not so. I have seen in almost every seaport in this country hundreds of British seamen who could not get employment, and as a matter of fact, if a sailor can get employment upon another ship, within six weeks of leaving his old vessel, he is a very fortunate man indeed. For every sailor that is required in any seaport town you will find at least nine or ten who want employment, and that is the state of affairs that has prevailed for the last twenty years. There has never been a scarcity of British seamen, and I say to the shipowners in this House, that if they want to fill their ships with British seamen and firemen they can do it to-morrow without any difficulty whatever. Let us take some of the principal lines; take, for example, the Cunard Line. Have they any trouble in getting British seamen? Take the White Star Line. Have they any trouble in getting all the British seamen and firemen they require? The same applies to the Union Castle Line, and any other firm of shipowners. I am not arguing that foreigners should not be employed; all I say is that if a foreigner is employed on board a British ship he ought to conform to our standard; he ought to be a qualified sailor or fireman, and he ought to be able to understand the ordinary language used on board a ship in giving orders. The cases that I have brought before the House of Commons from time to time of the class of crews that have been engaged at ports on the Continent for British ships reveal a perfect scandal. I have brought under the notice of this House cases in which fourteen and fifteen men have been engaged on a British ship in Antwerp, and eleven or twelve of them have been men of different nationalities, not one of whom was able to understand a word of our language. Can we wonder that ships are lost when manned under such conditions as those? Then I would like to ask what necessity is there for the discharge of crews in foreign ports? The right hon. Gentleman says the shipowners cannot help this, and that it is not a question of wages; but I say emphatically, in the presence of shipowners in this House, that there is one reason, and one reason only, why they discharge their crews in Antwerp, Hamburg and Rotterdam, and that reason is that they may get men at a lower rate of wages. Let any shipowner contradict that statement if he can. The Articles of Agreement for these men are drawn up for the final port of discharge to be a port in the United Kingdom; and when they discharge the men on the Continent, it is because the wages at Continental ports are about 20s. a month less than in British ports. I do not make that statement with a view of making grave charges against shipowners. I do not wish to give offence to any hon. Gentleman interested in shipping, but I do say that I am not going to have it said that the reason for the employment of such a large number of aliens in our ships is that they cannot get any other class of labour. I cannot possibly tolerate such statements being made when I know that they are a long way off being true. With regard to the lascar, I have no objection to lascars being employed whatever. I agree with some of my hon. friends who say that the lascar is a Britisher, but what about the lascars who are not Britishers? How many thousands of them have we on board our British ships who are not Britishers? What about the Chinamen included on board British ships? When were they made British, and what part of the British Empire do they come from? I noticed that there was a great cheer went up from the tariff reformers when the right hon. Gentleman spoke about the lascars being Britishers, and when he said that they ought to have more consideration than the aliens. I would say, however, that if you put the lascar's wages up to the standard of the alien, the lascar will no longer be required, although he is a Britisher. What I want with regard to the lascars is this. I want them to have the same conditions on board British ships that Britishers obtain. I want them to have the same accommodation as white men. As a matter of fact, according to the evidence given before the Mercantile Marine Commission, Dr. Collingridge, the medical officer of the Port of London, said, when questioned as to whether a lascar required as much space as a white man, that he required more space, because he was physically weaker. And yet we have shipping companies getting large subsidies from the Government who are employing lascars and giving them between forty and fifty cubic feet of space instead of seventy-two feet. We would have had 120 cubic feet as recommended by the Royal Commission had it not been that the Board of Trade would not offend the P. and O. Company by making a proposal to increase the accommodation. We could have increased accommodation for the white man if we would leave the lascar outside. I can see that the policy of that is to give them better facilities for employing coloured labour. With regard to the Chinaman, the right hon. Gentleman did not make any degrees when he talked of lascars, but he included, I suppose, all Asiatics. But the Chinaman is not a British subject, as far as I am aware, unless he hails from Hongkong, and I suppose they all come from Hongkong when they are on board a British ship. In dealing with the question of the language test, will the right hon. Gentleman deal with the Chinaman from Hongkong? He ought to know something of the English language at least. If all of them do not understand it, at least a proportion of them do. I have had some experience in this Chinese flood, as I call it, because British seamen have been gradually done out of employment on board British ships, largely by Chinamen whom I look upon as a greater danger than foreigners. I hope the right hon. Gentleman in bringing the Bill forward will not forget that. Then, with reference to the food scale, at last the long looked-for comes. I have been looking for this food scale for a long time now, and certainly I have made a good many speeches in the House of Commons with regard to it. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has not, as far as I can judge, made it as liberal as it ought to be. I was sorry to hear him say that it is on a lower standard than that of the United States of America. I think we ought to feed our seamen as well as those of the United States are fed, and I am rather surprised that we are not going to have such a good scale: why, I do not understand. The shipowners and other gentlemen interested in shipping to whom I have talked in regard to this matter have all assured me that they pay not less than 1s. 6d. per day per man for feeding the crews. The food recommended by Sir Francis Jeune's Committee only cost 1s. 1d. per day, so that the shipowners evidently are going to have 5d. per day out of this scale; 5d. per day is a consideration.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: The right hon. Gentleman says that they are not going to save 5d. per day. I know that the scale of Sir Francis Jeune's Committee will only cost 1s. 1d., and I do know that if the shipowners say they now pay 1s. 6d., then they are going to get 5d. per day.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: My hon. friend will see that the cost of food depends on how it is calculated. Are you going to calculate 1s. 6d. per day as the price here, or taking the voyage all round? It is very difficult to arrive at the price, because the cost depends upon whether you calculate here or make the provision for all over the voyage.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: We can only calculate from England.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Well, it will be nothing like 5d. per day.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I do not know that. I say that if a shipowner states that he is now paying 1s. 6d. per day, and that the new scale will only cost 1s. 1d., it will be a disadvantage to the seamen. It is time that we had a food scale, because there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction on board ship, and I think it is largely due to the unsatisfactory scale in existence since 1854. I am sure that the majority of the shipowners of this country feed their men well. It was only the other day that I asked a sailor who had been in the line, "What kind of food have you had?" "Well," he said, "we could not have had it better." But there are a minority to whom 8d. per day would be an extravagant price to pay. They are in the hands of the ship's stores dealer, and I say that very often indeed he is the worst chap of the whole lot. I heard of a case, and I have every reason to believe it is true, of a certain ship's stores dealer who opened the casks of beef and took so many pieces out of each cask, and in that way made up additional casks. Each cask contains 312 lbs., but in this case there was only about 270 lbs. Now, the steward is responsible for 312 lbs., and by-and-bye the beef begins to get down, and the captain begins to grumble at the steward when the beef is disappearing so rapidly. The steward has to clip a bit off the men every day to make it spin out. I think that the Board of Trade, when they inspect provisions, should also weigh them and see that the proper weight is in each cask. That would be a safeguard to the shipowners and protect their interests. A shipowner cannot always be present. He may have a ship loading in Liverpool, and he does not wish to trouble to go down there to see after the beef; but if he could know that the Government Department was seeing after not only the quality, but also the weight of the provisions put on board the ship, I think it would be an advantage to shipowners generally. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to carry the inspection a little further? At the present time the Board of Trade inspect only certain portions of the provisions, such as beef and pork, bread and flour. I cannot see why the whole of the provisions should not be subjected to inspection. Butter, tea, and coffee should also be inspected. I got a sample of butter from a ship the other day and I took it to an analyst. He thought it was cart grease. I showed it to one or two Members of this House and the smell of it was sufficient for them. One gentleman was going to venture to taste it, but I advised him otherwise. That butter had in all probability been purchased abroad. In all probability the shipowners did pay for butter, though it was not butter. The seamen who are supplied with provisions of that kind are getting food which is not fit for human consumption, and there ought to be some authority to whom they might appeal, and a prosecution should take place in the same way as would be the case on shore. With regard to cooks, I think the right hon. Gentleman has touched a very sore point on board ship. The food has not been very plentiful on some of these tramps which we have condemned severely; but when they have an inferior cook that makes matters worse, and I think the proposal that cooks should have certificates is a very good thing indeed. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will make the Bill cover as many points as possible. I do not want to ruin the shipping trade, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman of that: I want to help the shipping trade if I can; but, at the same time, I want to see a body of men in the mercantile marine that this country will be proud of, and I want to know that those men have something like fair conditions.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.): I desire to associate myself with the expression of opinion which has been given by my hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade upon the introduction of this Bill, which refers to a number of matters which show that human life after all is of some value to this country. As I understand the Bill, it has been introduced for the purpose of affording better protection to the lives of our sailors than is given at the present time. I welcome gladly the provision that seamen shall not be employed on British ships in future unless they have full understanding of the language, so that they may understand the orders given to them by their officers. May I venture to express the hope that the House of Commons will also later on carry out the same principle in connection with the mines of this country? A similar provision ought to be made by which alien miners — the Poles in Scotland — who do not understand the English language should be prevented from going into mines until they have learned the language sufficiently to understand the orders that are given; otherwise danger is involved not only to themselves but to the whole of the men employed. I was very surprised to hear the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that there is a shortage of British sailors. I represent the constituency of Barry Dock, perhaps the greatest export dock in the world, and I have found continuous complaints of unemployment by Britishers there. I have also found a similar complaint at Carnarvon. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade stated that the reason why alien sailors are employed is that there is a shortage of British sailors. Probably later on I shall have an opportunity of going more closely into this and inquiring into the actual facts of the case. My experience, like that of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, is that there are plenty of British sailors conditionally, that is, if the shipowners are prepared to pay the wages. It is largely a question of wages. There is no inducement under the present rate for a Britisher to go to sea if he can get work on land at all. One cannot be surprised under these circumstances that men will not go to sea, with all its dangers and discomforts, if they can get better wages on land. I therefore ask the President of the Board of Trade to give some attention to the question of wages which these men should enjoy; and I ask him, in reference to foreign sailors on British ships, that he should also lay down the law that alien seamen and firemen shall be paid at the same rate of wages as British sailors and firemen. I notice that provision is made for inpecting the provisions supplied to the sailors. That is very proper; but why not inspect the ships as well which are in course of repair in British docks? During the last day or two I have had a considerable correspondence with workmen interested in the shipbuilding industry, and they inform me that for want of local inspection by practical men many ships have been sent out of dock after repair which would not have been allowed to be sent, if they had been properly examined. Statements have been made to me—I do not vouch for their absolute accuracy—that some of the plates in some of these repaired ships were as thin as a shilling. Therefore, I venture to hope that the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade will follow up the close inspection which ought to be made of the food by a more exacting inspection of the vessels in course of repair than is provided for at the present time. In regard to what the right hon. Member for Dover has said on the question of alien pilots, I am not aware that it will be touched by this Bill, although I think that it should be. There is a real national danger in allowing masters and first officers of foreign ships being granted pilots' certificates to bring foreign ships into British ports, if their ships trade with these ports regularly. In Russia, Germany, France, and many other maritime countries, there are a sufficient number of men regularly working in these foreign mercantile ships who could pilot a foreign Navy into British ports. Therefore, if no provision has been made in this Bill to prevent that, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will do what has been asked for for many years, namely, provide that every vessel coming into a British port shall be piloted by British citizens, by men whom we can trust. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite if this question is so important as the right hon. Member for Dover now says it is, why did not the late Government do anything to remedy the evil when they had the power? I understand that the pilots in British ports have, by deputation and petition, been pleading with successive Presidents of the Board of Trade to do something to abolish what, in my judgment, is a very serious danger to the nation. I welcome the introduction of this Bill and support its principle, with the reservation that when it comes into Committee we shall be at liberty to move any necessary Amendments.

*SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton): In reference to what the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire who has just sat down has said in regard to the repairing of ships in dock, I may say that vessels nowadays are nearly all classified. There is not a single steamer or sailing vessel now being repaired in this country which is not properly inspected by the Surveyors of Classification Committees. I should like to congratulate the President of the Board of Trade on the manner in which he has dealt with the recommendations of the three Committees of which this Bill is the outcome. I think he has dealt with these recommendations in a very judicious and fair manner. I can only say that I was glad to hear his concluding remark that this is not a political question. It is not a political question, and I do hope I shall have the sympathy not only of hon. Members on this side of the House, but of hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches, when I say that we shipowners come here not to differ from the President of the Board of Trade, but to congratulate him, and to endeavour to make this Bill as good a measure as it can be made. The Bill, I believe, will do away with the necessity for any further legislation for fifteen or twenty years, for it is very much to be deprecated when there is continued interference with any trade. No trade can prosper when there is a fear that something will be done by way of legislation to interfere with it. We are all aware of the importance of the mercantile marine to this country. If it were not for that mercantile navy I do not think that our country and Empire would be what it is to-day; and therefore there ought to be sympathy with the men who carry on that trade, and they should be dealt with in a fair manner. Of course, we have in the mercantile navy passenger liners, but we do not look upon them as the whole of the mercantile marine. They constitute only 10 per cent. of that navy. The main part of it is made up by the so-called tramp steamers, which carry cargo all over the world. These are the mainstay of our mercantile navy. As the President of the Board of Trade has pointed out, this measure naturally divides itself into two sections, one to remedy some of the evils under which the British shipowners have suffered for many years, and the other to improve the conditions of seamen employed on British ships. British shipowners welcome the provisions which will put foreign vessels under the same restrictions with regard to overloading, seaworthiness, and equipment, as British, and also as to the regulations with regard to the carrying of passengers. In regard to the load line, I should like to say that, though in future, if this Bill passes, foreign steamers in our ports are to be dealt with in the same manner as those belonging to our own country, that is not the whole difficulty under which we labour. It is only in the ports of the United Kingdom that they will be interfered with. They will have the same freedom as at present all over the world to carry much greater cargoes than British ships can. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that no British legislation can remedy this; but we British shipowners shall do our best in the future as in the past to meet this unfair competition. I now wish to say a few words in regard to what a good many shipowners in this country will no doubt think the prejudicial part of the Bill. The clause making it impossible hereafter for sailors to be employed on our vessels who have not a sufficient knowledge of English seems right, and I, for one, am perfectly agreeable to that; and I am perfectly certain that a large majority of British shipowners are quite agreeable to have a law of that description. I think it is only right that the men manning our ships should understand the orders given to them, but I would warn the President of the Board of Trade not to make that clause too drastic. Everything depends upon the man who has the supervision of the signing on of sailors. I hope that when the Bill passes it will only put a stop to the engagement of sailors who cannot understand sufficiently the orders which are given to them, otherwise it might be difficult to employ foreigners on board of British vessels at all, and in spite of what has been said by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, I am of opinion, speaking from the experience of many years, that there is not a sufficient number of British sailors to man all our ships. If we were only carrying on the trade of our own country there might be a sufficient number of British sailors, but seeing that we are actually the intermediaries of the trade between foreign countries, it is quite impossible that we should be able to find a sufficient number of British sailors to man all the British ships at sea. I admit that there may be occasions when there are British sailors in British ports unemployed, and that some owners may give a preference to foreign sailors. But I am told to-day for the first time that the cause of that is the lower wages paid to foreign sailors.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I did not say that the foreign seamen accepted lower wages than British seamen in the United Kingdom. What I said was that foreign seamen accepted lower wages than British seamen in Continental ports.

*SIR ROBERT ROPNER: I accept that explanation; but what I say is that foreign sailors when engaged in this country get exactly the same wages on British ships as British seamen. There is no truth in the allegation that the foreign sailors are engaged in this country because they accept lower wages than our own men. I should like to say a few words in reply to what the hon. Member said as to the statutory scale of provisions. I speak again from experience, and I say that the food scale which is at present being employed by most of the shipowners costs something like a minimum of 1s. 3d. per day, and the food scale which is now being introduced by the Board of Trade will cost the shipowner an additional 3d. a day per man more than he has been accustomed to pay. The additional 3d. a day per man means £100 a year for a tramp steamer manned by twenty-five hands. Even £100 a year is a great consideration to a good many tramp steamship owners who cannot protect themselves by forming themselves into syndicates, conferences, and trusts, and who have to go into the open markets to do the best they can. Seeing that there is a great deal of competition by foreign steamships, it is a most difficult matter sometimes to secure freights with which you can pay your way, and to pay something like £100 more for food when you are aware that you are giving as much in the way of food as any workman in this country gets, and more than our sailors get under the food scale in the Navy, seems to me a little hard. I do not think that shipowners should be called upon to give a better scale than exists at present. Nevertheless, here again we are quite ready to do what is reasonable, and if this House thinks that the food scale proposed by the President of the Board of Trade is a fair one, I shall be the last one to say a word against it. I hope that the proposal will be generally accepted in that spirit by the shipowners of the country, but I repeat that the scale as now drawn is a better one than required, especially as I know that the hon. Member for Middlesbrough himself a few years ago would have been glad to have accepted a scale of a lower description. The next point I have to deal with is the inspection of provisions and water. There is no reason whatever why provisions and water should not be inspected. All shipowners are anxious to see that good provisions are put on board. This is naturally the case as we have to pay for them, and I am glad to learn that the Bill provides that not only shall the shipowners be responsible for bad stores, but that the storekeeper who supplies them shall also be liable. As to the scheme for providing certificated cooks, I am not quite sure whether the time before this Bill will come into operation is long enough to enable us to make certain that when the moment comes for this provision to come into operation we shall have sufficient certificated cooks in the country to supply the demand. We are told, however, that the President of the Board of Trade will have power to make new regulations, and I have no doubt that in this matter also he will have power to meet the difficulties of the shipowners should they arise. I think I have touched upon everything of importance in the Bill. I entirely approve of the intention of the President of the Board of Trade to have an Advisory Committee. Who are the people in the country who are best able to give good advice, and able to judge what is best for this shipping industry but those who are engaged in the trade and who are fighting its daily battle? Therefore I say it is a very wise thing that an Advisory Committee of that kind should be called into existence. It is another question whether the Board of Trade should receive the power which the President is going to take, to make new regulations without the consent of the House being obtained, and this is a question which the House itself must decide. In conclusion I should like to finish as I commenced. I do hope that this Bill will be looked at not only from the political point of view, but from the trade point of view, and that it will emerge from this House fashioned in such a manner that it will give entire satisfaction not only to the shipowners themselves, but also to the men whom they employ.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): I must join with my hon. friends in congratulating the President of the Board of Trade upon the presentation of his Bill, but I should like to put one or two questions to the right hon. Gentleman which I have tried to formulate as carefully as possible. I understood him to say that lascars were British subjects, and I quite agree that that is so. But with regard to the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman when he dealt with the question of foreigners on board British ships and suggested what the Government intended to do in order to dispose of the difficulties which have been encountered very recently, and especially in connection with several wrecks that have taken place on our coasts, I should like to put a query to him. The right hon. Gentleman is going to provide that a clause shall be inserted in his Bill whereby the Board of Trade official when the crew are being signed on is to satisfy himself that the foreigner is able to understand the British language. That is a provision which I entirely agree with, but lascars, although they are British subjects, do not understand the British language. I myself have worked on board ship, where, going into the forecastle of the ship, you would find thirty or forty of these men, not one of whom could understand a word of English. I do not know whether the same conditions are to be observed when the lascar is shipped on board British vessels, as are to be observed in the case of foreigners. If the right hon. Gentleman when he replies will bear that point in mind I shall be exceedingly obliged to him. I am not going to say one word about the provisions except in so far as the inspection is concerned. I understand from the President of the Board of Trade that an inspector will be appointed to carry out not in regard to part but in regard to the whole of the ships, what is being done at the present time in regard to a part. On certain ships the provisions are being inspected according to the principle laid down by the President of the Board of Trade for certain voyages. Now we have from the President of the Board of Trade a proposal that the inspectors of that body "may" inspect, and whilst I have every respect for and agree with the general remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, "may" to me is a word which is very permissive, and I do not myself believe in Acts of Parliament where there are too many "mays." This word is very often interpreted in a very wrong way. I happen to be a member of one of the Local Marine Boards of this country. I am a lay member, and have been appointed by the Board of Trade, but nearly all the other members of our Local Marine Board are shipowners. It is the same throughout the country, and I would respectfully suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should consider this matter and give a fairer representation to seamen on the Local Marine Board. This would do away with the suspicion which is created in the minds of the seamen by the fact that nine-tenths of the members of those Boards are directly connected with or interested in shipping. In other respects I trust the President of the Board of Trade will not make this Act too permissive. I should also like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that he has omitted to consider one important post on board a ship. I refer to ships' carpenters. There is no compulsion upon a ship to carry a ship's carpenter, but where there are ships' carpenters no provision is made for their examination. At the present time a system prevails whereby a man is shipped on board a vessel not as a carpenter, but he is termed "seaman and carpenter." There is a very old saying that no man can serve two masters, and he certainly cannot be at the same time a seaman and a carpenter. This method of shipping him is adopted from the economical standpoint and not for the purposes of securing safety. I say that the President of the Board of Trade should do by the carpenter what he does by the engineer. You will not enter into your dockyards or into the ships of the Navy a carpenter unless he passes an examination, and if you insist upon that in the Navy and the dockyards, why should not care be taken that thoroughly trained men, conversant with the technicalities of ship-building, are employed on board other ships? There are many technical matters upon which in case of emergency it is necessary that the ship's carpenter should be fully instructed. I thank the President of the Board of Trade for having brought forward this Bill, and for suggesting that it should not be dealt with by means of any hard and fast line. He says that he is willing to receive all that he can get in the way of opinion from this House, and that with the assistance of the House of Commons he will endeavour to carry a Bill which shall be suitable, and which shall at any rate in every way be practicable and possible. Therefore I appeal to him to insert in the Bill a clause as to the carpenters on board ship, that they shall pass a qualifying examination, showing that they have served their apprenticeship to the trade, and that they are able in a practical way to demonstrate their ability, and in a theoretical way to explain all that is necessary for the safeguarding of a vessel at sea.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has to-day dealt in a very sympathetic manner with a matter of great importance and of increasing interest. The Bill which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced has been awaited with very great expectation and interest, but judging from what we have heard this afternoon those expectations are not likely to be fully realised, though there is reason to hope they will not be entirely disappointed. It was hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would have been able to see his way to do something to prohibit or restrict the employment of aliens, not only as seamen, but also as captains, officers, and petty officers, and as pilots in British waters. With regard to the employment of aliens as seamen, the Bill which is to be introduced proposes to deal only with the fringe of a great question, and that very lightly, by what is called the language test. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has suggested one reason for not dealing with this question on its merits. He says there is some doubt as to whether there are a sufficient number of Englishmen to man the ships now largely manned by foreigners. On that point I admit there may be some doubt, although the information that I have gathered does not confirm the view that there is any great shortage of Englishmen for this purpose. On the contrary there is strong evidence that if Englishmen are wanted they can readily be obtained. But however that may be, if it should hereafter appear that the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman was not accurate, and that the employment of aliens was not due to the lack of British seamen, I do not gather that, under this Bill, he would be able to deal with that subject. That seems to me to be a serious defect in the Bill. If we are to have provisions dealing with foreign emigrant ships calling at English ports, dealing with the load line; with the carrying of life saving apparatus; with the storing of grain; with the food scale; and in addition to all these provisions the Board of Trade proposes to take powers for the purpose of modifying certain existing regulations. It seems to me a great pity that the right hon. Gentleman does not cast his net a little wider, and take powers to deal with the question of the employment of aliens in the mercantile marine, and with the question of granting pilot certificates to aliens in competition with British pilots, many of whom have served an apprenticeship of twelve years before they could aspire to the responsible and remunerative position which is practically within the grasp of any foreigner who has had six months experience in our waterways. Another point which might have been considered, but which I think that the right hon. Gentleman has not considered, is the question of the discharge of British seamen in foreign ports. That is a question that presses for treatment at the present time, not only because it indirectly affects the whole question of the employment of alien seamen, but also because it leaves British seamen stranded in foreign parts and leads to great hardship. Among other things it leads to the spending by British seamen discharged at foreign ports of their accumulated wages, which would otherwise reach their families to be spent in England. No adequate facilities are afforded to seamen to send their wages to their families at home. It is true that there is some arrangement by which the wages may be sent home through the British Consuls, but the charges made by the Consuls are excessive. They amount to something like 3d. in the £, which is about four or five times as much as the ordinary banker charges for a similar accommodation. In the year 1904, at the four ports of Antwerp, Dunkirk, Rotterdam, and one other whose name I do not recollect, 27,674 British seamen were paid off, and only 4,134 remitted their wages home. Out of the £232,000 which was paid to them in wages, only £54,000 was transmitted to England. I submit that that is a matter that might well engage the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade and power, to deal with it should be included in the powers he now proposes to take for the Board of Trade. I do not say that we should not be thankful for the language test, and accept it with gratitude for what it is worth, but whether it would be feasible to have a Board of Trade official in every seaport of the world in order to secure that no alien should be shipped who did not understand the English language is a point which we can only find out in practice. No captain short-handed in a foreign port would be very hard to satisfy as to the knowledge of English by a foreigner desiring to join his crew. No seaman who had been doing double duty owing to the ship being undermanned would be very critical on the point. The complaint I make against the Bill is that its policy is the policy of personal restriction, whereas powers of general restriction (subject to Parliamentary control) would enable the Board of Trade to deal with each and every grievance as it arises. Instead of a language test the Bill should provide general powers to impose such tests or restrictions as circumstances might show to be desirable. The Board of Trade might take powers to make regulations—as it has made collision regulations—instead of having to come to this House on each occasion with a proposal for new legislation. To take such powers would not necessarily prejudge the question of their application. The new regulations would lie on the Table of the House and would be subject to Parliamentary sanction. They would commit neither Parliament nor the Board of Trade to anything, but at the same time the plea of having no power could no longer be made the ground for non-interference. One of the chief objections to this Bill is that while it only touches very lightly the fringe of this important question it will be counted in the future as a measure dealing with the whole question. However ineffective it may prove to be—and I hope it will not prove to be very ineffective—it will be brought forward for years to come as a reason for not further dealing with the Merchant Shipping Acts. It may therefore, while doing very little good now, be the means of preventing much good being done in the near future. We hear much of the pressure of time in this House, and the right hon. Gentleman has said very truly that it is very difficult to carry an Act of Parliament whenever a change of regulations is required. For that very reason, therefore, I would urge upon him now to put in this Bill all that may be required in the near future; to include in it all the subjects that he and the past Presidents of the Board of Trade have had pressed upon their attention. It has been said by the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors in office, and notably by his immediate predecessor, upon a question which was put to him with regard to the issuing of pilotage certificates to aliens, that while they sympathised with those who brought the matter forward, they had no power to act. Let the Board of Trade take power now. I urge this upon the right hon. Gentleman now, because he has introduced a good Bill and has outlined the way in which it is going to deal with a very important question. But the Bill unfortunately leaves outside its scope many other important matters of detail which must inevitably call for treatment before long. Now, therefore, is the time when the right hon. Gentleman should see to it that this Bill shall be no mere makeshift but should, so far as circumstances permit, be made a comprehensive and an effective measure.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs): The House, having heard the speech of the hon. Member for Stockton, will regard that as a happy augury of the prospects of this Bill. Nobody could have spoken with greater weight upon this subject, and the hon. Gentleman will, I am sure, have the support of every one who desires to see legislation on this subject. When he said that he trusted that this question would not be discussed in a Party spirit, or treated as a political measure, I agree that there is a good reason why the Bill should not be regarded in that light. Here we are not only dealing with a great Imperial industry, but with a class who, by their calling and their absence at sea, are precluded to a large extent from taking part in the elections to this House, and who are therefore to a large extent unrepresented. I congratulate the Government on having introduced at so early a stage in the session this important measure for the good of this great industry and for the good of what has been a neglected class of the community for many years past. I should not have intervened at this stage of the Bill had it not been for the attempt that has been made to drag the trail of protection over this measure. I served on the Committee appointed by the late Government and presided over by the late Secretary to the Board of Trade, Mr. Bonar Law, and I remember then that some alarm was expressed that this Bill might have a protective tendency. The Chairman of that Committee was perfectly fair in the attitude he then took up, and he stated that there was never any suspicion of its having any protectionist character. As for the main provisions, I think on the whole they are excellent. I will say a word about these consultative committees which have been proposed. I think those committees are very desirable, but where I think we need some reassurance is that the representation of the officers and men shall be adequate. I think that if that is secured these committees are good in themselves, because the officers and men are so much at sea, and it is so comparatively difficult for them to combine, that the shipowners are not in such constant touch with them as other classes of employers and employed, and I look to these consultative committees, as giving them a common meeting ground, to remedy some of the many grievances of which we complain. I am delighted that so much stress has been laid upon inspection. We all of us regret that there is not a greater proportion of British seamen on board our mercantile marine, and I am sure that one of the best ways to set about the remedy is by having better conditions of food and accommodation. I hope that the inspectorate will have a wide discretion, and will be able to inspect very freely and very largely at its discretion, and that an effective remedy may be introduced. I think the language test is an excellent one. I myself will not go much farther than that, at any rate at present, and I think so far from this being an unimportant Bill it promises to be one of the most valuable of measures to one of the most neglected classes; and when we reflect, whether in regard to compensation for injury or in respect to other circumstances, how this class has been, I might almost say wronged as compared with other sections of the community, I think we might well join to secure for this Bill a full and fair discussion, and give it every chance to pass into law.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Representing a riverside constituency—a constituency which has observations always on trade and commerce as represented by shipping—I think it not unnatural that I should say a few words in connection with this Bill, so ably introduced by the President of the Board of Trade. I think that the moderation of the speeches which have been delivered is the best evidence that can be given to the President of the Board of Trade, first, of the wisdom of having brought in the Bill, and, secondly, of the wisdom of the provisions so far as they go. For myself I do not think the provisions have gone quite far enough, and I do not wish the President of the Board of Trade to think that is because I am supposed to have protectionist leanings. It is not that, but it is because one cannot travel the world over and observe the conditions under which our seamen work, and in which our shipping moves throughout the Empire, without having brought home very strongly to him certain inequalities, the regulation of which the right hon. Gentleman has embodied in this Bill. The President of the Board of Trade would not think, I believe, that he had protectionist leanings if I said that he was interested in the regulation of inequalities in international trading as represented, for instance, by the embargo placed upon British shipping in the islands of the South Sea. I do not want to enter into that question, but it must show the House that one is necessarily impressed in watching the developments of our shipping by these inequalities in international trading which oppress not only the seamen but the shipping itself. The President of the Board of Trade said that he was very much astonished to see the proportion of foreign seamen in our mercantile marine as against the number of British sailors employed. He regarded it at first as a very serious thing. I still regard it as a very serious thing. The President of the Board of Trade thinks also that possibly these conditions will be ameliorated by foreign countries in developing their own shipping and absorbing the men who now come into our mercantile marine. Very well; but is it not a curious thing that since the very beginning of the development and extension of foreign shipping there has been an increase of foreigners in our own mercantile marine? That is a point which I beg the President of the Board of Trade to consider.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: What I more particularly referred to were the conditions of sailors on board foreign vessels.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER: I may have misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman, but I think the impression of the House was that they were going to absorb in their own ships the seamen who now come to us. I think, on the contrary, that when you once begin to decline in the employment of your own people, unless you take more or less drastic measures, you cannot prevent continued decline. If the tendency is to decline it will continue to decline, and if there is an upward movement, it will continue to be upward unless you have something more than a moral oversight of these conditions. I suggest to the President of the Board of Trade that while I am sure he is sympathetic with me and a great many others who sit on the Opposition side or on the Ministerial side in regard to alien pilots, he ought to put his sympathy into practical exercise. I know the House is quite aware that while we admit alien pilots into our waters to exercise their functions, without any of the real examination which our own pilots undergo—an examination which belongs also to a constant daily experience in our waters—while that is the case, not a single British pilot can have the run of foreign waters. That is an inequality which has nothing whatever to do with protectionist leanings, but has to do with an injustice which I hope the President of the Board of Trade will attempt to remove, in spite of the suggestion that the agitation behind this Alien Pilots Bill may come from the Opposition side of the House. I honestly do not think that the President of the Board of Trade would attribute to sympathy with protective measures in other directions the view we take on this matter, and if he goes on in the course which I judge he has mapped out for himself in this Bill, I think he will find on the Opposition side of the House constant congratulation. I have always felt during the six years I have been in Parliament that the Board of Trade was behind in matters which it ought to have been forward in. The President of the Board of Trade has an opportunity of creating for himself a reputation in that department of public service for which not only his own side of the House will thank him, but also the Opposition and the Labour Members. May I raise another question? I do not know whether Members on the Opposition side will agree with me or not—but take the question of the lascars, and other Asiatics, who are employed in the mercantile marine. It is a very difficult question and involves a constitutional consideration, to say the least, but I think that in the interests of safety the language test ought to be applied to them as to foreign seamen—to this extent, that one man at any rate out of ten lascars should be able to speak the English language. It is evident that I am not pressing this in order to achieve any object except that of having in our mercantile marine the quality of safety. Now the President of the Board of Trade bases all the provisions regarding these regulations as to foreign seamen upon the basis of safety. I really do not think it is the case. I think he has other ends in view. However that may be, he let the matter rest upon the basis of safety. I really cannot see why the same element of safety should not enter into the employment of lascars in our mercantile marine, and I would suggest that the Serangs, who are generally the head of about ten lascars, should be able to speak English.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: He must.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER: Very well; but is that embodied in the law? I press this upon the right hon. Gentleman as a question to consider. It would naturally come up on the Second Reading of the Bill. I congratulate him on his intention of establishing regulations for a load line and for a scale of food. It is not for me to say a word against shipowners or to make any criticism whatever, because I do not know the inside of the business as the right hon. Gentleman does; but I have, for the past five years, been reading on this subject—my constituents compel me to do so—and I find that again and again responsible public men connected with the trade of shipping have stated that much could be done, by improving the scale of food on ships, in inducing not only boys to enter the mercantile marine but to stay and not desert. The right hon. Gentleman said, I think, that 28,000 seamen deserted last year. That is a very serious thing indeed, and I believe that if the seaman's life, which is not an easy one, were made more palatable by better fare, and better accommodation on board, there would be a difference in the returns regarding desertion, and you would not find that continually decreasing number of British seamen. I wish to read an extract from a report upon certain occurrences at Cardiff, to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. Cardiff is, of course, in a peculiar position, as we all know. Cardiff is different from almost every port in the kingdom; there you have a centre of disaffection among seamen for many reasons. You have the question of employment of "Greeks, infidels, and heretics" and people of all nationalities, who are employed at £1 per month less than British seamen receive. If you have one part of the United Kingdom where that kind of thing is going on, you have just as dangerous a thing surrounding wages and employment and the standard of life of the seamen as you would have if you introduced into Stepney 8,000 or 10,000 aliens. It is exactly the same thing. Bring foreigners into Stepney to lower the standard of wages and the whole condition of labour, and you have exactly the same thing as occurs in Cardiff which is described in the following newspaper quotation—

> "It is not uncommon outside Cardiff shipping offices to see scores of British seamen standing aside with discharge books, while the books of Spaniards, Portuguese, Greeks, Italians and Russians have been taken possession of by the chief officers of ships. In a walk along the Bute Road—the main thoroughfare to the docks—one meets and hears as many foreigners as Britishers."

I think I see in this proposed Bill something which is going to have a considerable effect upon such conditions, because if it establishes the principle that every foreigner upon a British ship must understand the rudiments of the English language, then I think that when that British ship goes abroad to a foreign port, it will not dismiss its British seamen to the same extent as is being done now, if that ship when it returns to a British port must employ a foreigner who can speak the British language. Therefore, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon one means of checking alien immigration which I think will be most effective, and it has no taint whatever of those principles which I and my friends profess. It is retaliatory but not protective. It only establishes the conditions that there shall not be gross inequalities of service between the foreigner and the British citizen. I shall have great hopes of the Party opposite if the President of the Board of Trade is only permitted to lead them in their policy, which will satisfy me as well the Labour Members sitting on this side of the House, who are as keen about these things which are not called by such names as terminological inexactitudes, but which deal with conditions in which foreigners work at an advantage over the British workman, whether in shipping or any other form of labour in the national life. I wish to quote one thing more, and it has reference to the question of wages. We have dealt most largely in the House this afternoon with sailors in our home ports, and in what may be called home trade. I wonder if it is realised how extensive is the employment of foreign sailors on British ships in distant parts of the world. The figures, I am sure, have astounded the President of the Board of Trade, and they have astounded me. Of petty officers the percentage of foreigners is between 60 to 78 per cent. of those employed, able seamen 77 per cent., and firemen 86 per cent. Those figures relate to sailors employed on British ships trading to the Ear East and elsewhere.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Does that include lascars?

*SIR GILBERT PARKER: No, it does not include lascars. If these figures are not correct, they are worth consideration. This report goes on to say—

> "I have exact particulars of a small vessel trading to the East which has tried all three crews for the same voyage. The monthly wages were:—British (18), £81; Dutch (18), £68 5s.; Lascars (37), £60 13s. There was a further difference in the cost of food of 5s. 9d. a day in favour of the lascars against the other two, which both cost the same for this item. The proportion in cost works out thus:—Lascars 100, Dutch 118, British 131."

It must be clear to this House that if you have those cutting conditions in the trade of shipping or anything else, our own seamen must suffer. It has been said in the House that the fact is that there is no competition, and that our working classes do not care to be seamen. It is said that other trades are more attractive, and that even if you were to give them more encouragement they would not accept service as seamen. I may say that there is scarcely a week passes without an appeal reaching me from my constituency from some home or foreign-going pilot, or some waterside man who says that he cannot get his son into a British ship. I know two instances of boys of nineteen years of age who are able-bodied fellows, who came up to the London docks and applied to the British ships there, and could not get on; and why? Because of the foreigners. At last one of them got a berth on an American ship, but the other returned to Gravesend and he is still seeking employment. That young fellow wants to go to sea. I am aware that British shipping companies have done a vast deal to encourage boys to enter the mercantile marine. I think the right hon. Gentleman suggested that Sir Alfred Jones had tried to experiment first under Mr. Ritchie's scheme which was effective although not so effective as it ought to be. Other firms have records which I could enumerate and develop, but I forbear on this the first reading of this Bill. Earnest efforts are being made by British shipping companies to induce boys to go into the mercantile marine. A remarkable letter was written by Lord Inverclyde which offered a very excellent suggestion, to which I will draw the attention of the President of the Board of Trade. Lord Inverclyde says—

> "I believe British shipowners are most desirous of employing dependable British sailors, and from my own experience those sailors who have had a training in the reserve of the Royal Navy are most desirable men to have in merchant vessels, and if the Admiralty will do more to encourage boy sailors in the Naval Reserve, there will be more British sailors in the mercantile marine."

If there were more co-operation between the Board of Trade and the Admiralty in this direction, I think a great deal might be done. The danger is not alone an industrial danger. It is serious enough industrially, but it is also a national danger. It effects our very security and our position as a great mercantile nation; and not only this, but it affects us also as a great Imperial Power with vast interests in every part of the world to protect. Continually, as we are opening up new avenues for our trade in neutral markets, since we are shut out of other markets to a considerable extent, there devolves upon us the responsibility of encouraging by some wise scheme the employment of boys as apprentices. I know the old system of apprentices cannot be re-introduced, but I suggest that these figures are extremely suggestive and very significant. In the year 1845 the number of apprentices in our mercantile marine was 15,704, but in the year 1903 the number was only 1,072. I do not know whether the hon. Members who represent the interests of labour more directly than I do can see a way out of that difficulty, but I do suggest that the President of the Board of Trade, in further developing this Bill, as I hope he will do, will see if there is any way by which he can create a new interest for boys in our mercantile navy and give them a new encouragement. I am certain that if the right hon. Gentleman develops this Bill on the lines upon which it has been introduced, and if it passes with all those suggested clauses which the right hon. Gentleman has presented this afternoon, the course of the employment of foreign seamen in our waters and in our ships will be arrested, and we shall have started upon a new course in the defence, shall I say, of the interests of our shipping, of the interests of industry, and of the interests of labour. Because I feel that this Bill is a step in the right direction, I most cordially support the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has brought in; and when he has passed it, the President of the Board of Trade will have produced for this country legislation which is for its good, for the good of trade and commerce, and in the interests of national safety.

*MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I should like to say a word or two with regard to this Bill. It seems to me that not sufficient attention has been paid to the mercantile marine in times gone by; this Bill is wanted very badly so far as the mercantile marine is concerned. It has occupied a very prominent part in the recent election, so far as the north-east coast is concerned, on account of there being no load line on foreign vessels trading in the ports on that coast, in competition with British shipowners, and the difference between the load which they are able to take has proved sufficient to enable the foreign shipowners in many cases to take the trade away from British firms. I am pleased, so far as this particular phase of the question is concerned, that in future both are going to be treated alike. I do not agree that we have not sufficient men in our own country to man the mercantile marine; on the contrary, I am convinced that we have sufficient Britishers, but when you review the whole of the circumstances appertaining to the mercantile marine, you will find that the conditions are not sufficiently tempting to induce boys to go to sea. If this Bill is carried out in a proper spirit, and all those reforms which have been mentioned are given effect to, the mercantile marine will be made more attractive, and we shall find that there are plenty of English lads ready to go to sea to serve their time as in days gone by. Certainly, so far as our sea-ports are concerned, the number of lascars and other foreign seamen employed have not at all admitted of English seamen going to sea. It is all very well to talk of the lascar being a Britisher, but whether in that category or not he should be made to comply with the same regulations as the British seaman. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill dealt with the case of foreign crews. I think that would be a danger in case of war, and it is not creditable to us as a nation that we should have so many foreign seamen on board our ships as we have at the present time. I think we ought to view the matter very seriously from that standpoint. I am convinced that if we were at war with any strong nation we would find it was an extreme danger. We ought to give more attention to it than the right hon. Gentleman seems disposed to do. In regard to the question of handing seamen over to municipalities for training, I think that should not be altogether considered a municipal question. In this country, however, some authority, I contend, should see to the fulfilment of the conditions laid down. I think there are many ways in which we might encourage lads to go to sea, and I would like, so far as the municipalities are concerned, that encouragement should be given to them to provide the necessary material. I am pleased that the question of a food scale has been dealt with; I think that has been a standing disgrace in regard to many of our ships for many years. I do not see why we cannot have a food scale for the mercantile marine. We have a food scale in connection with the Navy and the Army. There is one matter which was touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman which I do not care much about, and that is the question of advisory committees. It has been a grievance for many years with regard to local marine boards that you have generally on a board one representative of the men and nine or ten shipowners. If we are going to have advisory committees of that character, then so far as I am personally concerned, the proposal will not receive my support If we are to have advisory committees there should be equal representation on them, and on that condition, and that condition only, am I prepared to hand over increased authority to the advisory committees. I am sorry that the question of alien pilots has not been dealt with. I do hope that this question will be dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman. I know that the pilots of the place from which I come feel strongly in regard to this matter; they have not only "deputised" myself on that question, but they have written to me at the House of Commons, and it will be a great disappointment to them if it is not taken up and dealt with in this particular Bill. I am very pleased at the advent of the Bill, and I hope and believe that if it is carried out in a proper and true spirit, it will tend to make the mercantile marine of this country more attractive to our sons, and tend also to the benefit of the nation.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I represent, it is true, an inland city, but it is one which takes the greatest interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the mercantile marine. When I contested my first constituency, twenty-one years ago, Mr. Samuel Plimsol, to whom the mercantile marine are so greatly indebted, represented the City of Sheffield. That shows that it is a city which has been most deeply interested in seamen and in the shipping of our country, My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade has received much congratulation from both sides of the House this afternoon, and I hope it will be an encouragement to him in bringing in this measure of justice for British shipping and British seamen. I hope it will encourage him to turn his attention to other matters pertaining to his department, and that he will see that equal justice should be done to our countrymen in all branches of trade and commerce. For myself I have never pretended to care in the least from what Party the reforms I have advocated come. I am ready to accept them from the right hon. Gentleman opposite quite as readily as I should accept them from my own side. The only thing that I aim at is the reforms themselves, and if the right hon. Gentleman will endeavour to carry them out, my gratitude will go out to him quite as much as to his predecessors in office, who happened to be my political friends. It is not a question of fair trade, or protection, or tariff reform, or anything of that sort; it is a question of justice to our countrymen in the shipping trade and to our own sailors. The Bill which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has described this afternoon in many particulars, so far as we are able to gather from his able speech, appears to carry out, or endeavours to carry out, that measure of justice to our own people. I think he will admit that from all on this side of the House the matters to which he has referred have received very full consideration. The ship-owners, represented by the hon. Member for Stockton, who speaks with unequalled authority, gladly welcomed the Bill. The seamen themselves have been largely represented, as also the interests affecting the sea ports. The right hon. Gentleman will not have failed to notice one suggestion of a very significant character which came from an hon. Member on his own side. It was to the effect that he ought to take care that the wages paid on foreign ships coming into British ports are on the same scale as the wages paid to British seamen on British vessels. I do not desire a better sentiment to be expressed from any part of the House or from any section of the community than that, and when we find that that feeling was received with so much favour on the benches opposite I hope my right hon. friend will take note of the sentiment and direct his legislative measure in that direction. I join with the hon. Member for Sunderland in expressing regret that nothing has been done as regards Alien pilots. This Bill will be referred to the Grand Committee on Trade, and it will be left, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, to the good judgment of that Committee without any pressure from Government Whips or political Parties. It is quite possible that the right hon. Gentleman may see his way to incorporate or assist in the incorporation of a clause in the Bill which will carry out this measure of justice with respect to the pilotage on our coasts. It is perfectly scandalous that so long a time has been allowed to elapse without any adequate measure being taken in that direction. Not only is there considerable danger indeed in giving such an intimate knowledge of our ports, harbours, and coasts to foreigners, but the competition which they exercise in that very important profession is of a very serious character, and I hope that means will be taken to put an end to it, and to enable our people to compete on fair terms. Many times in the past twenty years I have called attention to the immigration of between 10,000 and 15,000 foreign sailors. The hon. Member for Sunderland spoke of the difficulty of getting boys to enter the Navy and the figures which were given to the House by my hon. friend the Member for Gravesend were of a very significant character indeed. There were 15,000 apprentices in 1854 and only 1,000 in a recent year to which the hon. Member referred. I think the reluctance of boys to enter the mercantile marine is connected very intimately indeed with the enormous immigration of foreign sailors who make it exceedingly difficult for them to obtain a satisfactory livelihood. The hon. Member for Middlesbrough, who speaks on this subject with authority, said that for every berth our British sailor could obtain there were from ten to twelve candidates. That is a very serious statement to have made to the House, and it is important that at last we should have the attention of the Board of Trade directed to this circumstance. I am sure that every support that can be given to the right hon. Gentleman in carrying the Bill which promises to be of such a valuable and useful character will be given by all the hon. Gentlemen who sit upon this side of the House. For myself, if I may venture to do so as representing a constituency deeply interested in the mercantile marine, I express my gratitude for the measure he is proposing to introduce.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I trust that the House will now allow us to get our Bill. I did not introduce the Bill under the ten minutes rule because I recognised that there ought to be an expression of opinion on a matter of such considerable importance to the shipping industry. But I hope it will be recognised now that we have had two or three hours debate that we should be allowed to get the Bill brought in. The reception accorded to the Bill has been exceptionally gratifying. I think I had better not tread on the dangerous ground which the right hon. Gentleman opposite invited me to enter upon; it is rather a quagmire, and I would rather avoid it at the present moment. There are two or three very practical questions which have been raised in the course of the discussion, which I should like to reply to before I sit down. The question of alien pilots was referred to by the hon. Member opposite and by my hon. friends on this side of the House. It is not such a serious matter as hon. Members seem to imagine. I have gone into the matter and I find that there are only eighty-five certificates issued to foreigners. Now that cannot be a very serious detriment to our pilots in this country. Still, I agree on the whole that they ought to be granted. My impression is that none of the Presidents of the Board of Trade have come quite up to the high standard of the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield. This practice is quite recent, and I do not think it is one which ought to have been entered upon. I might have incorporated a clause of this kind in the Bill had it not been for the very important constitutional question which arises upon it. I believe that there are foreign countries which give pilot certificates to our shipmasters. At any rate, it is a treaty question. I submitted the matter to the law officers of the Crown, and it had to go to solicitors first. As hon. Members know, these gentlemen do not move very rapidly, and therefore I did not get an opinion from the law officers of the Crown on the point before my Bill was introduced. But if my legal friends tell me that there is no great constitutional or international difficulty in the way, and if any Amendment is moved in that direction to the Bill when in Committee, I shall be happy to accept it.

MR. WYNDHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow that that be an instruction to the Committee?

*MR. LLOYD GEORGE: I should say that that would be a question for Mr. Speaker. In regard to the advisory Committee, I do not understand my hon. friend opposite to deprecate the setting up of such a Committee. There must be a Committee to advise before the regulations which affect a very great industry are framed. The hon. Gentleman must not assume that the Board of Trade would not set up such a Committee without the seamen as well as the shipmasters being adequately represented. I certainly had it in my mind that there be representatives of a class whose lives depend on the working of these regulations. My hon. friend raised the questions of lascars. I do not understand him to go as far as to deprecate the employment of any lascars on British ships. That would be provincialism of the very worst kind. I think that my hon. friend only wishes that there should be a certain proportion of white men to the lascars, and, if I understood him aright, he suggested four in sixty. At the present moment there is one white man in fifteen, which fairly answers to what my hon. friend wants. Then my hon. friend spoke of the lascars being unable to understand English orders; but there is a serang, who gives the orders to the lascars, and I believe that he understands the sort of English language which is used in the East on British ships.

*SIR GILBER TPARKER: The proportion of white men to lascars may be the same as mentioned by the right hon. Gentlemen on P. & O. liners, but there are certain tramp steamers on which the proportion is not so large.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have given a general answer to the hon. Gentleman, but I will look into the matter further. I understand that there is not such a difference as my hon. friend seems to imagine, in regard to the question of wages paid to lascars. I am informed that if a calculation is to be made in regard to the wages paid on board ship, two lascars are equal to one European. I understand that you cannot employ Europeans in the stokehold in the Red Sea.

*Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I would point out that more than half the ships trading to the East through the Red Sea have white men employed in the stokeholds.

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That was the information given to me by a shipowner. However, I do not think that there is such a difference with regard to the wages as my hon. friend stated. I sincerely trust that hon. Members will now allow this Bill to be read a first time.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): The right. hon. Gentleman spoke of emigrant ships coming to British ports picking up passengers, but he did not make any mention of foreign immigrant ships which bring an enormous percentage of foreigners to this country, nor did he make any reference to the disgraceful condition in which these people come to this country.

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That matter will be dealt with in the Bill.

Mr. C. D. SCHWANN (Cheshire, Hyde): There is, I am informed, as much danger of ships being underballasted as being overloaded, and I hope something will be done to fix a light load line. I am told that in an ordinary sea the screw is well under water in a lightly ballasted ship and that the vessel is well under control, but that in rough weather the screw pitches out of the water, and it then becomes exceedingly difficult to direct the course of the ship. A large proportion of the dangers and harm to vessels in ballast occurs when they are not sufficiently ballasted. I do not want the right hon. Gentleman to overload his Bill, but I wish to draw his attention to this matter, which is worthy of serious consideration.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I wish to ask a question in reference to the *status* of officers on board British ships. Is it the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to do anything to secure that these officers shall be British subjects? As I understood the President of the Board of Trade, he only referred to the members of the crew. Then as to the Consultative Committee. There are two associations — the Merchants' Service Guild and the Mercantile Marine Association. Does the right hon. Gentleman propose that either of these associations should have some representative on the Advisory Committee?

*Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: In regard to foreign officers on board British ships, they must get a British certificate. As to the second point, I hope the hon. Gentleman will not invite me to enter on the very thorny subject as to which of the associations I shall make a selection of representatives on the Advisory Committees from. I will not commit myself on the point at the present moment. On the question of a light load line my hon. friend knows that it is a very difficult point, and that a Bill was introduced in the House of Lords on this subject and was dropped. However, I will consider it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901, and that Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Kearley, and Mr. Runciman do prepare and bring it in.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 114.]

SUPPLY [19th March] REPORT.

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

"That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said he would like to say with what pleasure as an old soldier he had listened to the sympathetic speech with which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had introduced the Army Estimates and the appreciation the right hon. Gentleman had expressed of the services of the officers of the Army. They had heard very frequently in that House depreciation of Army officers, and that depreciation had been very painful to brave, honourable and sensitive men who, having devoted themselves to the defence of their country, were unable to defend themselves in this House. He was also pleased to hear the appeal which the right hon. Gentleman made that the consideration of Army questions should be approached from a non-Party point of view. That appeal had been made by himself from the benches opposite and he regretted to say that it did not meet with the response which he thought it deserved, but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman and those who represented the War Office in the House that, as far as he was concerned, and he believed those sitting near him were quite agreed with him upon that point, they should on this question of Army administration, Army reform and Army organisation, show a non-Party spirit, though, of course, they reserved to themselves the right to criticise any proposals which might be brought forward. He was also pleased to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that he proposed to take the advice of the expert officers with whom he was now associated at the War Office rather than the advice of the experts of youth and inexperience sitting below the gangway on the Ministerial side of the House. With regard to the land forces that we had to keep up, he was one of those who did not desire that we should have in the Army a single soldier more than was necessary, but he did not believe that by simply reducing the numbers we should necessarily increase the efficiency of the Army. As had been pointed out by many speakers, the strength of our Army depended upon our Indian and Colonial garrisons, and he must say that he looked forward to the time when the Colonial garrisons might be substantially reduced, if they were not taken away altogether. That time might be near or it might be distant, but he believed that in that direction we might eventually get some reduction of our land forces. With regard to India, however, he did not think anything of that kind was possible. The number of white troops which we kept in India at the present time was only 78,000, and although some Members had referred to the state of Russia at the present time and had drawn from that the idea that we might reduce our garrison in India, he did not believe for a moment that that was possible. Russia had no doubt suffered severely during the late war, but he believed that she had throughout it a very large force indeed upon the frontiers of Afghanistan. She was now withdrawing her Army from Manchuria, and there was no reason why that Army, or a very large portion of it, should not reinforce the troops which Russia already had on the North West frontier of India. They heard very often that the invasion of India through Afghanistan by Russia was a difficult operation, not in the least likely to be carried out. While, however, it was a difficult operation, the obstacles were not insuperable, and British forces had more than once traversed the territory; they had overcome all the difficulties of transport and supply by military foresight and arrangements. Then it was said that Afghanistan was hostile to Russia, but when the British force from India reached Cabul in 1879 they found in the Afghan Treasury a large number of Russian gold coins. He had one of them with him. These Russian gold coins were sent there for a certain purpose. It was to pave the way and make Afghanistan the approach to India. There was no reason to suppose that what had been done once should not be done again. Under these circumstances he failed to see where the argument advanced by hon. Members came in. These gold coins were captured by the British, and at the time money not being very plentiful in the British Treasury chest, they were issued to the British troops for their pay; that was to say, the British troops were paid with Russian gold. He thought that was the only pay he had ever saved. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech in introducing these Estimates by stating that our Reserves filled up the battalions for service. That was perfectly true, and our Reserves were in no proper sense of the word Reserves at all. They often heard it said that Mr. Cardwell's scheme gave short service and a Reserve, but that was only part of the truth. It really did neither. It did not give us short service in the way in which it was understood on the Continent, viz., service for two or three years with the Colours and a longer period with the Reserve. For the simple reason that we had to keep up the Army in India we could not reduce our term of service in the way that continental armies could. We therefore depended upon an intermediate service between the short and the long service. But even that was not entirely successful, for in 1889, when we had to mobilise our Army, the Estimates provided for a force at home of Regular troops of 125,000, and for a Reserve of 90,000. The Reserves were, however, practically only 78,000, and when it became necessary to mobilise our Army in South Africa we had to leave at home no fewer than 92,000 men who were unfit for war service. The result was that after deducting these 92,000 men and calling up the Reserve of 78,000, the Army after mobilisation was 14,000 weaker than before. That was a very unsatisfactory state of things, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour by some means or another to see if he could not get a real reserve for the Army. At present, as he had said, it was no true Reserve. So long as that system went on we should find ourselves in the same difficulty, the numbers of our Reserves must be limited by the number of our battalions and the strength of those battalions. The pay of the British officer was very much the same now as it was in the reign of Queen Anne, and if the right hon. Gentleman wished, as no doubt he did, to get officers for the Army it was necessary that they should get better pay, more especially those who joined the more expensive branches of the service such as the cavalry. Whenever this question was put before the right hon. Gentleman representing the War Office in this House, it always received the same answer, namely that, though it was very desirable, there was no money to meet the extra expense. The time had, however, arrived when the officers of the Army should not have to depend upon any private fortune they might possess. The time had come when the country should be called upon to pay the officers of the Army a living wage. Officers of the Army should not be subjected to the stress and strain to which they were now subjected by having to pay so much out of their own private means. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider this matter in the scheme he proposed to bring in next year.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he was one of that numerous body of Members who sat upon the Liberal side of the House which had denounced the late Government for its extravagance. He was fully aware of the difficulties which had to be faced when making reductions, and he did not blame the right hon. Gentleman for taking plenty of time to consider the way in which this reduction should be made. If the right hon. Gentleman found the difficulties very great, he (Mr. Lupton) would suggest that it would be a good thing to strengthen his hands by the appointment of a Committee who would permanently take in charge the War Office Estimates—men who would not be salaried officers of the Crown and who would have to consider, not the feelings of the Department, but the ordinary taxpayer. It was not for the spending department to fix the amount of the expenditure, but those who had to find the money. The Army would never be a popular service and the Army would never have an efficient staff of officers under a system by which the officers were drawn from one class and the rank and file from another. If the authorities wanted the Army to be made popular in these democratic days they must make the ranks the only way through which a commission could be obtained. If that were done young men of every class of society would enlist. He himself had a friend who, not having much money, went into the Army and worked his way up with great credit to himself, but he finally had to leave the Army because he could not win commission rank. He was a gentleman by birth and education, and he had to leave the Army because it had no career for him. If the alteration he suggested were made, it would be found that the class of men who became officers would be like those who were at the heads of great civil establishments, who had worked themselves up and acquired great scientific attainments. The men who went into the Army would be drawn from all classes, the emoluments offered being quite sufficient. The pay of a lieutenant or captain was not much to a rich man, but it was to a poor man, who would have an incentive to work hard to qualify for higher appointments, and the result would be that there would be in the Army a body of officers possessing considerable scientific knowledge. If this alteration were made it could not be said, as it was said during the Boer War, when the enemy told off sharpshooters to pick off our officers, that it was a mistake on their part, as it left the intelligent non-commissioned officers and men free to manage the Army in a proper way. A friend of his who went through the greater part of that war, with a force of cavalry, had told him that a young officer, who was sent out from England to take command, ordered them to dismount and take the bridles out of the horses' mouths, though everybody except the officer knew that there was a Boer gun 1,500 yards away. It was not until five men had been knocked over by the Boer fire that they got word to disperse, and that order was given by the sergeant. If the men who had charge of our Army had gone through the ranks, things of that sort would not have happened, nor should we have had a general officer ordering our forces to a river, as at Colenso, which river could not be forded, and, as there were no boats, those who could not run away were shot down. We could never have an efficient Army until a vital alteration was made in the manner in which the officers were chosen. It was possible to effect economies in the Army without reducing but adding to efficiency. There were four general officers commanding-in-chief, whose total salaries were over £12,000 a year. Why should we pay a general officer £3,000 a year? It was not as if they were obtained by advertisement. If we wanted to obtain the services of a soldier of fortune from any part of the world to lead our Army, it might be worth while to pay him £3,000, or £30,000 or even £300,000 a year. But the men now in charge entered the Army when they were almost boys, and they did not know whether they were going to be field-marshals or not, and a sufficient pay for that position was £1,000 a year. It was unnecessary to give these large salaries. In civil life inspectors of mines, who had to do a tremendous amount of hard work and undergo great dangers, rose to £800 a year; a few getting £1,000 a year. For that money the best talented men of science could be obtained. Not only could an enormous amount of economy be made in officers' salaries, but also in the number of the higher officers. There were seventy-seven generals, all tumbling over each other's heels, and all enjoying large salaries. He doubted whether many of them would be much good in the case of an invasion by Germany or France, or even to conduct a war in some distant country. Again, there were £4,500,000 spent in pensions. It was quite right that an old soldier should have a pension, but it was not necessary to give such large ones as some of the officers received, the average for officers being something like £300 a year.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Pensions are not borne upon this Vote, and the hon. Gentleman therefore, is not entitled to discuss that question.

*Mr. LUPTON said that the total number of men of all ranks in the service of the King was 1,300,000; but he doubted whether we could put at short notice 100,000 men into a foreign country. If that were the case, as he believed it was, it did not say much for the efficiency with which the Army had been maintained in the past. When the Army was 50,000 men less than it was now, it was almost impossible to put 100,000 men in South Africa without a lot of fuss in this country, and a great many men had to be enlisted, and Militia and Volunteers sent out. That showed that the Army system was thoroughly bad and inefficient, and therefore it was not a question of merely how to reduce the cost of the Army, but also how to make the forces efficient. If the carrying out of what he considered was necessary economy would produce inefficiency he would not advocate it. A few years ago we had a discussion upon Venezuela. The President of the United States took up the side of Venezuela, and he sent a telegram stating that it would be worse for us if we did not submit to arbitration. How was it that what this country refused to Venezuela we yielded to the President of the United States? Because we knew that the United States was impregnable; the country was so vast and the men so warlike that for this country to have attacked the United States would have been folly. They might have bombarded our sea coast towns.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not confining himself to the Vote before the House, and I must ask him to be more relevant.

*MR. LUPTON said that he considered that the troops in many of the garrisons abroad were a source of weakness rather than of strength, because they might require more troops sent out to them in order to defend them. He excluded those at Gibraltar, Malta, and Hong Kong, but with those exceptions the troops we had abroad which were not required for policing purposes were sources of weakness. He thought it would be agreed that the number of troops maintained in India was relevant to this discussion. It had always been said that the construction of railways in India would reduce the number of troops required for the defence of that country. The troops in India could now be more easily concentrated on one spot where they happened to be needed, and an Army half the size would be considered more efficient with the aid of the better railway facilities than one double the size at a time when there were no railways. On those grounds he suggested that the Indian Army should be reduced by one half, and that the supports of the Indian Army in this country should also be reduced by one half. With regard to armaments, our troops are now armed with the magazine rifle.

*MR. SPEAKER: That subject arises on another Vote. I must warn the hon. Gentleman that I have already twice called him to order for irrelevancy.

*MR. LUPTON urged that in India the north-west frontier was not the greatest source of danger, because the danger was more likely to be on the Japan side. A large extension of the land forces at home was necessary for the security of the country. He thought that could best be done by increasing the Volunteers. They might be doubled in numbers.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That question arises on a different Vote. I have now called the hon. Member to order three times for irrelevancy, and I must therefore ask him to discontinue his speech.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said the Secretary for War yesterday disclaimed any responsibility on the part of the War Office for the introduction into Waterford of a South African horse disease through Army horses. The disease had been introduced owing to the want of proper precautions on the part of the Army Veterinary Department. He might say that the matter was at one time thought to be so serious that it was a question whether or not the arrangements for the great national horse show should be suspended. He had listened with surprise to the reply given by the right hon. Gentleman to the speeches made upon this question. He could furnish the right hon. Gentleman with many statistics showing that the disease had been introduced through the medium of Army horses, and this had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin. There was no doubt about this disease having been introduced by Army horses, and he could confirm it by evidence from his own constituency, because there never was a case of South African distemper in Waterford until the Army horses were brought back from South Africa. He did not know how the right hon. Gentleman could say that the War Office was not responsible in any respect. He could quote speeches in which the Secretary of State and the War Office were informed, before the horses were ever sent home, of the existence of the disease in South Africa and of the dangers which might result from their being brought to this country. Would it be believed that the veterinary authorities were cognisant of this state of things and that they allowed a number of horses stationed at Waterford to be sent out to grass in the country districts? In the end these horses were slaughtered. The War Office had peddled and trifled with the outbreak while the horses were in the barracks. It was on account of the horses having been sent out to grass that the disease had been spread. The county council had done their duty most admirably, and by their action the disease had been largely, if not altogether, stamped out. The indirect effect of the outbreak in the dislocation of trade and the stoppage of fairs and markets had been enormous in his constituency There was not a single case of disease in the city or county of Waterford among so-called civilian horses until 7th February, 1905, and fifteen months before that there were the cases he had referred to in the barracks. There never was a clearer case in which the locality had no part in the origin of the disease. It was bad enough that the people of Ireland should be obliged to pay for a war with which they had no sympathy, but it was doubly hard that as a legacy of the war this disease should have been brought to the country. When he made a claim some time ago for compensation from the War Office, on behalf of the local authority, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin admitted that there were special circumstances in the case, and though he would not give a direct promise, he said he was quite prepared to recognise that there were special considerations to be taken into account. The disease had been propagated by the horses of officers who went out to hunt. He thought a reply of another nature might have been expected from the Secretary of State for War yesterday.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.) said the reply given yesterday by the right hon. Gentleman was the exact antithesis of the attitude taken by the late Government on the subject. Members of the late Government admitted that there was a case, though they contended that they had no power to give compensation out of Army funds for the loss sustained by local authorities. The right hon. Gentleman had alleged that he could claim from the locality for the loss of military horses by this disease. The facts easily disposed of that contention. He was rather surprised at what he could only call the audacity of the Army Veterinary Department in putting such an answer into the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman. The first case occurred on 5th October, 1903, and the horse was shot. Five horses were shot and cremated eight days later. During the whole of 1904 horses were from time to time shot and cremated in the military barracks of Waterford. These cases occurred before there was a single case outside the barracks, and during that time officers whose horses were quartered in the military barracks were hunting throughout the district. In June, 1904, a number of horses were sent out to grass, and on 29th July one of them was shot. Three horses were shot in January, 1905, because they had been in contact with animals which were affected. These horses which were the private property of officers were sent out to the country, the officers thinking that in this way they would be able to save them from being slaughtered. His contention was that the Army Veterinary Department did not take such strong measures as they ought to have done to stamp out the disease. When there were animals in the barracks suffering from disease the officers' horses were allowed to go out three or four times a week to hunt all over the country. There were eight cases in 1905 in civilian stables, and seven of these places were stables of hunting men. As the result of the outbreak of disease the county of Waterford had already had to pay £800 as compensation out of the rates. The Waterford Agricultural Society lost £345 in the expenses they had incurred when they were prevented from holding their annual show. The horses in the county of Waterford were prevented from attending the great horse show in Dublin and other local shows, and the result was that those local shows had to be dropped after all the preparations had been made for them. The direct loss had amounted to £1,500, but the indirect loss to horse breeders and horse dealers could only be estimated at many thousands of pounds.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that his constituency adjoined Waterford and there was an outbreak of this disease there traceable to the same cause—the introduction of the plague from South Africa by the military horses. Whole districts of his county had been put to enormous expense and trouble to stamp out the disease; while for three years in succession the shows in county Kilkenny could not be held. The local rates had suffered to the extent of £1,000, while the people had likewise suffered from not being allowed to move their horses from place to place. The War Office owed more than an explanation to the county councils; they owed compensation for the expenses they had incurred; and still heavier compensation to private individuals whose losses could be traced to the introduction of the disease by the military horses.

MR. HALDANE said he could assure the hon. Gentleman who had introduced this subject into the debate that the most strict instructions had been given to the Veterinary Department of the War Office, and their Report was that there had been no disease among military horses in Waterford since October, 1904, and he thought for some time past in other parts of Ireland. Even assuming that the disease had been originally introduced from South Africa—he did not admit it—it had spread among other horses.

MR. O'MARA: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the outbreak was spontaneous?

MR. HALDANE said that what he maintained was that horses were being constantly moved about, and the investigations of the War Office Veterinary Department went to show that there was no evidence that in the county of Waterford and still more in other places, the disease had been brought home to the military horses. On that footing the War Office was not liable. All he could say was that the utmost care had been taken of the military horses, and that everything had been done to prevent the spread of the disease.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he wanted to refer to a point which was inseparably connected with the pay of the regular soldier. If a higher rate of pay was offered, undoubtedly a better class of men might be induced to join the Army. At any rate, such men would be attracted if some more satisfactory outlook was offered the regular soldier when his term of service with the colours had expired. Volunteers earned wages, even when drilling; but the regular soldier was taken into the Army at a time when he had not had an opportunity to become a tradesman; and when his period of service expired he was cast upon the market as a casual labourer. In our large towns such as Liverpool there were thousands of these men. There was no more sad sight in the face of civilisation than to see a poor woman, whose husband had gone out to find work, trying to comfort her children who were crying for bread. This casting of old soldiers on the market had increased the army of casuals, and that had caused more damage to the Army than anything else. He had looked in vain for some promise from the Secretary for War on this subject, and he suggested that when the reorganisation of the Army was taken up in detail, this matter should receive the most earnest consideration. In Germany the health, physique, and trade of every soldier was looked after. Each soldier had an opportunity of going on with his particular trade; but in our Army nothing of the kind was done. He had been present two or three times at dinners given to Army veterans, and the fact that the greater proportion of those veterans had to be brought out of the workhouse to enjoy the dinner was a scandal.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) regretted that he would be unable to move the instruction of which he had given private notice, as it was not in order, and therefore he moved the rejection of the Bill, in order to obtain some promise from the supporters of this measure to remedy the grievances which were complained of. His complaint was that while the railway gave sleeping-carriage accommodation to first-class passengers, they refused any such accommodation to their third-class passengers. The third-class passengers at the present time paid all the expenses of working the traffic, while the first-class carriages were always run at a loss. While the company did, as he was told, lose by its first-class sleeping carriages that loss, if any, had to be made up from the profits made out of the third class passengers. This railway came to this House for further favours for the benefit of its shareholders, and he submitted that the Bill could only be accepted upon the company undertaking to give equal facilities to both classes of passengers. Up to the present moment he had not heard that the railway company was willing to offer the third class passengers any facilities whatsoever. Personally he would have been satisfied if they had even said that they would consider the matter; but they did not even go as far as that, and therefore he had nothing to do but to oppose the granting of any more favours to this company until the grievance of the third class passengers was considered and dealt with. He moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he rose to second the rejection of the Bill, not in any spirit of hostility to the company, because he was a large shareholder in it, but because he thought greater facilities ought to be given to the travelling public. There had been considerable negotiation between the Midland Railway, the Great Central Railway, and the people of Sheffield, who were very much prejudiced by the way in which the trains were run at present by the three competing lines, or perhaps he ought to say by the three different lines, because they evidently had an arrangement among themselves of which Parliament was not cognisant. He would not weary the House by going into the details of the Bill; he would only say that he had been requested by large numbers of his constituents to take this and every other opportunity to bring this matter before the House. He thought that a commercial community of 450,000 was entitled to better treatment than Sheffield was receiving from this company at the present time, and upon that ground, and generally for the purpose of getting some assurance that greater facilities would be given to them, he seconded the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he had been asked by the Midland Railway Company to state their case as shortly as possible to the House, and to ask its attention to the Bill now before them. He would first say that he had been informed by the Midland Company that the questions his hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Central Division of Sheffield was so anxious to raise were now engaging their earnest attention. With regard to the complaint of the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire he would say at once that the hon. Gentleman was right in voicing the complaints of the third class passengers, and he might be sure that, so far as in them lay, the railway company would do their best for that class of the travelling public. With regard to the Bill itself it conferrred no new powers on the company. It asked for powers to carry out works which were for the benefit alike of the travelling public and of the railway company; it did not ask for any great powers or the devolution of any great powers, nor did it ask for the application of any new principle. He submitted that the Second Reading of an omnibus Bill of this description was not the proper time to raise such questions as those raised by the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire. He thought, moreover, that of all the companies attacked for not giving facilities to the third class passengers, the Midland Railway Company was exceedingly free from the charge of neglecting that section of the travelling public. In fact, the Midland Railway Company was the first to consider them; they had been the pioneers in the matter of improving the condition of the third class passengers. They were the first company to run third class coaches on all their trains and to abolish the second class. He had been particularly asked to state that the policy of giving greater comfort to the third class passengers would continue to be their policy. The fact that such benefits had been given by them to the third class without any instructions from this House should, they thought, entitle them to some consideration at the hands of the House. They also thought that the question raised by the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire was a question of internal management, and if pressed would only lead to a suggestion that the company were incapable of managing their own affairs, which was an insult to the shareholders. He asked the House to support the Second Reading and to send this Bill to a Committee.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said the chief complaint of the hon. and gallant Member opposite was that this was not the best opportunity for the consideration of the questions raised by his hon. friend the Member for Sutherlandshire. But the House must remember that they were face to face with a situation which would preclude their having any opportunity other than the present of drawing attention to the great railway monopolies of this country and their duty to the travelling public. He thought that the complaint of his hon. friend was a just and proper one, and that before the Bill was allowed to be read a second time the House should have some assurance from the railway company that they intended to deal with these matters. That was not asking too much of the company, and if some assurance was not given then he would follow his hon friend into the division lobby. He hoped that they would not have from the Government a strong Party rallying call with regard to this matter, but that the Government would leave this matter an open question so far as their supporters were concerned. He supported the Motion for the rejection of the Bill.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he accepted the assurance of his hon. and gallant friend and would withdraw his present opposition to the Bill. But if that assurance was not carried out he warned the railway company that he should oppose the Bill at its subsequent stages.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.) desired to call attention to the fact that the railway companies had combined to defy the Board of Trade regulations in certain particulars. He thought that the President of the Board of Trade ought to look very closely into this question in order to find out definitely whether certain kinds of goods should or should not come under the Board of Trade regulations. About eight months ago the companies combined together and decided not to take a certain class of goods except at owner's risk. They met together in conference and resolved to refuse to take such goods as furniture and the like at the company's risk, under the Board of Trade regulations. In his opinion that was a matter which should be gone into very closely, because there were many manufacturers in London and elsewhere who were not able to fight this question for themselves, and therefore the Board of Trade should see that the railway companies were not allowed to continually defy these regulations.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. EMMOTT, Oldham) said the House would possibly desire to hear a word from him before this matter was decided. He recognised the importance of the objections against the Bill raised on both sides of the House, and he thought that at the proper time they would be discussed and dealt with. The House ought to remember that in these cases there was always a community of interests between the railway companies and the public, and they ought not to forget that when coming to their decision. He asked the House to take the view that the Bill ought to go to a Committee and ought not to be rejected on Second Reading. The grounds of objection taken to the Bill were well worthy of consideration at the right time. He thought he should point out with regard to the question of third class sleeping accommodation that that question had better be discussed on another occasion. It was really a matter which, if any change was desirable, called for a change of the general law rather than for amendment by a private Bill of this character. The real question they had to consider on the present occasion was whether this Bill ought to go upstairs to be considered by a properly constituted committee, who would go into the question of whether the concessions asked for by the Midland Railway were of a reasonable character. One of the best features about this House was the way in which Private Bill Committees upstairs did their work. They considered with great care and great patience objections which were brought before them, and he thought in most cases they came to wise decisions. The Midland Railway Company asked for certain facilities from Parliament, and the question they had to consider on the Second Reading was whether it was right and proper that those facilities should be considered by a Committee upstairs. What the hon. Members who were objecting desired to do was to say that because some other facility was not contained in the Bill the measure should be summarily rejected. He begged the House, which was a new one, not rashly to interfere with an omnibus railway Bill dealing with comparatively local and small matters. The objections which had been raised, however just the contentions of hon. Members in regard to them might be, were not of a nature to warrant the rejection of the Bill on the Second Reading, or to justify the House in refusing a fair hearing before a Committee upstairs. All that was asked, no doubt perfectly legitimately, could hardly be properly put into the Bill. If the Bill were rejected on the Second Reading, and the facilities which were asked for and which were probably of some importance to the public were summarily refused, it would interfere with trade and also with employment. Therefore, so far as he was concerned, he should certainly vote for the Second Reading, and he asked the House to do the same.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said he could not admit that the principles which the Chairman of Committees had just laid down were the principles which always governed the action of the House, because it was decided the other day on the occasion of the Rathmines Sewage Bill—on which the hon. Member did not give the new House, as he called it, any advice whatever—that the only question which the House should consider was whether a particular district was Protestant or Catholic. There was no word that night as to whether this railway ran through a Protestant or a Catholic district. There ought not to be a different principle in relation to the different quarters of the United Kingdom from which these Bills came, and so far as he was concerned, accepting as he did fully the decision which the House came to, viz., that a district in Ireland must not be drained because it was a Protestant district, he should certainly vote against any private Bill which came before the House, unless he had at first ascertained whether he was voting in relation to that Bill on Protestant or Catholic grounds.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 202; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 19.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,NE.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Arnold-Forster Rt Hn.HughO.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barker, John
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex,Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D. (Derbyshire,N.E.)
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James(Aberdeen
Bull, Sir William James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cairns, Thomas
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clynes, J. R.
Coates, E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A.Cameron(Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H.(St.PancrasN
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Duncan, Robert(LanarkGovan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Emmott, Alfred
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fullerton, Hugh
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Glendinning, R. G.

Gooch, George Peabody
Grove, Archibald
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazleton, Richard
Helme, Norval Watson
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hills, J. W.
Hodge, John
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Laidlaw, Robert
Lawson, Sir Wilfred
Lever, A.Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lundon, W.
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Murnaghan, George
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James(RoscommonN.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rose, Charles Day
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Chas.E. (Manchester)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Simon, John Allsebrook
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southamp'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Lane-Fox.

NOES.

Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Campbell, J.H.M.(DublinUniv
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cleland, J. W.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Captain James(Down,E)
Cremer, William Randal
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hogan, Michael
Hope, John Deans (Fife,West)
Hunt, Rowland
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Keswick, William
Levy, Maurice
Liddell, Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Montgomery, H. H.
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Shee, James John
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampt'n)
Reddy, M.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Steadman, W. C.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thorne, William
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E.Howard
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Morton and Mr. Dalziel.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 237; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 20.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn Hugh O.
Astbury, John Meir

Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Hn. Guy (Winchester)
Barker, John
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordsh.)
Boland, John
Bolton,T.D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cairns, Thomas
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clynes, J. R.
Coates,E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A.Cameron (Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay (Galw'y
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson,W.H. (St.Pancras,N
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Duncan, Robt. (Lanark, Govan
Dunn, A. Edw. (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Emmott, Alfred
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fullerton, Hugh
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Grove, Archibald
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hammond, John
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen, W.
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hills, J. W.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Laidlaw, Robert
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever,W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hn. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh,Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Montagu, E. S.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph.
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col Ivor (S'thampton)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price,CE(Edinburgh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rose, Charles Day
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E.(Manchester
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Cheshire
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor,Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Thomson, W.Mitchell (Lanark
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampton

Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George(York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Lane-Fox.

NOES.

Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Campbell,J.H.M (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cleland, J. W.
Corbett,CH (Sussex,EGrinst'd
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hunt, Rowland
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Keswick, William
Liddell, Henry
Montgomery, H. H.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thorne, William
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir William Bull and Mr. T. L. Corbett.

Bill read a second time and committed.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL
(BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. MORTON moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. He was not at all disheartened by the vote just taken on the Midland Railway Bill. He remembered when he proposed in 1893 to insert a Clause in a Tramway Bill to prevent extra fares being charged on Sundays and public holidays, he was opposed by the Liberal Government of that day, but in the end he defeated them and now that clause was a "Model Clause" and in every Tramway Act all over the United Kingdom, and he had no doubt that the forty-three good and true representatives who voted against the previous Bill would win in the end. [Cries of "Divide" from NATIONALIST Members.] He should like to remind hon. Members from Ireland that he and others had supported them on many occasions in the dark days, some years back. They would gain no time by trying to shout him down. He did not at all agree with the doctrine laid down to-night by the Chairman of Committees. The Chairman knew distinctly that the matter he (Mr. Morton) had brought forward could not be considered upstairs under the present circumstances, and therefore he must do his best to get this Bill thrown out. He remembered that in 1882 when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was President of the Board of Trade he told the people of this country distinctly that it was not only their right but their duty on occasions when railway and other companies came to Parliament to ask that grievances should be redressed by the companies before any other favours were granted to them by Parliament. He was sorry the Government were against him to-night; but he warned them that in the interests of the people they would defeat the Government yet on this matter. There would be further opportunities on the consideration and Third Reading stages of these Bills to get redress for the grievances properly complained of by the people and he should avail himself of all those opportunities.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT seconded. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Epping Division of Essex, who appeared to be a universal railway director, was able to give the same assurance for the benefit of his constituents as he did in the case of the Midland Railway Bill, but if not he should have to support the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DALZIEL said it was most unfortunate that on an important Bill of this character no one was commissioned by the railway company to offer a word of explanation or to reply to any question which might be reasonably asked by any Member of the House. He believed there were directors of the company in the House, and it was their duty to say something. He did not believe that the division on the previous Bill was any indication of what the opinion of this House would be upon the question of whether or not proper accommodation should be provided for third class passengers. They were not asking for anything they were not willing to pay for. They would pay their 5s. or 7s. 6d., and it would recompense the railway companies to meet them in this respect. The railway companies were making a mistake in turning a deaf ear to the reasonable demands that were made. He regretted that so many hon. Gentlemen had found it their duty to oppose the present demand, which represented the opinion of the great mass of working people. In view of the fact that apparently no one was present to give any assurance on behalf of the railway companies, and in view of the fact that there were other matters to be considered to-night, he begged leave to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

The House divided: Ayes, 137, Noes, 166. (Division List No. 21.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Brace, William
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clynes, J. R.
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grove, Archibald
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hudson, Walter
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lewis, John Herbert
Liddell, Henry
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Mallet, Charles E.
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Montgomery, H. H.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson

Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Rose, Charles Day
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Snowden, P.
Steadman, W.C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thorne, William
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E.Howard
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Dalziel and Mr. Morton.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Bolton, T.D.(Derbyshire, N.E.)
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bramsdon, T. A.
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bull, Sir William James
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St. Pancras, N
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duckworth, James
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Duncan, Robert (Lanark Govan
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Emmott, Alfred
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Forster, Henry William
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody
Hall, Frederick
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hardy, Laurence(Kent Ashford
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Helme, Norval Watson
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon., S.)
Hervey, F.W.F.(Bury S.Edm'ds
Hills, J. W.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman(Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Idris, T. H. W.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jowett, F. W.
Kekewich, Sir George
Keswick, William
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lever, A. Levy(Essex, Harwich
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Magnus, Sir Philip
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Moss, Samuel
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, C. E.(Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rendall, Athelstan
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Schwann, Chas. E.(Manchester)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn.A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomson, W.Mitchell (Lanark)
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley(Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Colonel Lockwood and Mr. Lane-Fox.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): The Resolution I have the honour to submit for the consideration of the House, reads as follows—"That in the opinion of this House, the revenues of Trinity College, Dublin, are not used to the best advantage for the promotion of the higher education of the Irish people, and that, in view of the deplorable condition of higher education in Ireland, it is of vital and urgent importance that the control and administration of these large revenues should be so achieved as to make them available for the use of the general body of the nation."

I am not going to be tempted to enter upon anything like a critical historical survey of Trinity College and the University of Dublin, for the best of all reasons—I am not possessed of that close intimate knowledge of the institution which some of my learned friends can justly lay claim to; it is enough for my purpose to give a cursory glance back and see what it has done in the way of fulfilling its obligations in so far as providing a higher class University education for my fellow-countrymen, and how it is engaged to-day in the pursuit of that great educational mission. As the House is well aware, Trinity College was established in the year 1592, on a charter of incorporation granted by Queen Elizabeth, and I speak the candid truth when I say it was built and endowed on the ruins of and out of the funds derived from the confiscated properties of the Catholics of Ireland. During all those centuries it has been conducted on exclusively Protestant lines—a foreign institution, nurtured and pampered during all those years for the express purpose of degrading and keeping the Catholic people of Ireland in ignorance—whilst its enormous revenues are employed for the purpose of catering and providing a higher class University education for practically all those opposed to the Catholic and Nationalist forces in Ireland. As I have said, three centuries have now passed since it was first called into existence, and, except for some slight change which has taken place in the government of the College within a comparatively recent date, it has never faltered in its original mission, but remained perfectly consistent and even loyal and faithful to the teaching and spirit of its founders, and has even treated the Catholic people of Ireland as outcasts and strangers. Some attempts have been made to concede to Irish Catholics a system satisfactory to the people, but all such attempts have failed, so far, in carrying out the objects in view. In the year 1794 the Irish Parliament made an attempt to settle the question: Up till that period the Irish Catholics were forbidden to attend the colleges giving a higher class education. Since then various other attempts have been made in the same direction by the Government of this country, and all of them have resulted in turning out failures of the worst possible kind. The last attempt, as the House will remember, was the appointment and sending out of a Royal Commission in the year 1901, for the purpose of gathering together all the expert evidence in Ireland on the subject, with a view of evolving a scheme satisfying the requirements of the Catholics of Ireland. A good deal of time and trouble was spent in trying to find a way out of the difficulty; they compiled a number of books of great educational interest, but the fact of excluding Trinity College, the one solitary teaching University in Ireland, from the scope of the inquiry, reduced the value of, if it did not destroy entirely the Report of the Commission. As usual nothing has come out of that Report, and Ireland to-day, as a consequence, is deprived of the opportunities for higher class University education, enjoyed by every other civilised country in the world. At the time the terms of reference to the late Royal Commission were being settled it was made abundantly clear that Trinity College should be included if it was to bear any good result. The Presbyterians protested, for at a meeting of the Education Committee of that body a resolution was passed and sent to the Government. The Committee—

> "Protested in the strongest terms against the suggested exemption of Trinity College, Dublin, from the scope of the inquiry of the Royal Commission, as any inquiry so restricted instead of inspiring public confidence would awaken mistrust, etc."

Some of the other religious bodies also expressed dissent, and it is well known that Trinity College was excluded from the inquiry, because, amongst other reasons, Judge Madden threatened to resign his Commission if there was any inquiry as to Trinity.

The great Archbishop of Tuam, in examining the late Mr. Lecky, stated that Trinity College—

> "Deliberately excluded itself from the purview of the Commission."

And His Grace said that that was—

> "A real misfortune."

So that the cry was that no inquiry was to be made into Trinity College, and it was clearly on this understanding that the representatives of Trinity supported the claim of the Catholics to have a University of their own, though subsequently they made use of the exclusion of Trinity to do injury to any other finding of the Commission. For Dr. Traill, the Provost (Vol. III. p. 205), said—

> "If a new College is started in Dublin, with reduced fees, etc., it would be impossible for Trinity College, Dublin, to hold their own against such unfair competition. Again, in order to be in a position to defy competition, they would require another £100,000, and an annual grant of £6,000 a year."

And then Dr. Traill went on to say that there was room for another College and University in Dublin. All this goes to show that Trinity College was purposely and designedly excluded from the terms of the Commission. I suggest that it was because they were afraid it would be proved up to the hilt, that since the Fawcett Act was passed in 1873 it would be impossible for the College to prove that the property of the University granted to it by Elizabeth, James I., Charles I. and II. was to be used as private property of the Provost and Senior Fellows, or that the confiscated estates were to be used for Protestant and Episcopal purposes only. In the debates in this House in 1873, the College authorities professed the desire to make the University a national one, and this is borne out by the preamble to Fawcett's Act, which reads—

> "It is expedient that the benefits of Trinity College and the University of Dublin and of the schools in the said University, as places of religion and learning, should be rendered freely accessible to the nation."

It could be shown that Trinity College has been enormously endowed out of public funds, not merely from the funds derived out of the Catholic estates confiscated all over the land, but by special grants from the Irish Parliament. In June 1709, our Parliament granted £5,000 to Trinity—

> "For erecting a public library in the said College."

Again on 31st October, 1751, a further sum of £5,000 was voted—

> "To be expended in and towards rebuilding and adding to said College."

And Taylor's History says—

> "By the sanction of their Majesties King William III., Queen Anne, King George I., II., and III., various sums were voted by Parliament for buildings in College, the whole sum amounting to £75,000, and still later a sum of £20,000 was lent (interest free) by the Government for the same purpose. Again, a sum computed to be about £140,000 was given as compensation for the right of presentation to livings which was taken away from the College in 1869. And it must also be borne in mind that under the Land Act, 1903, a yearly sum of £5,000 a year was guaranteed to Trinity to make good any losses sustained through the operation of the Land Act. The rental of Trinity College Estates, which are scattered over twelve counties, and which comprise about 200,000 acres in the lands of about 10,000 tenants, and which is valued under the Poor Law valuation at about £100,000—is usually referred to as about £36,000 a year, but this is entirely an underestimate. No doubt the College receives £35,423 a year from middlemen, but in addition they draw a large rental of about £7,500 from tenants in occupation, and the Provost's private estate, the rental of which is not ascertainable, but which I am sure I do not exaggerate when I hit upon the valuation, which is £2,640, making a gross total of revenue to the College of £45,583."

From all this it is clear that those speaking on behalf of Trinity College acted wisely in excluding the College, its endowments, its revenue, its controlling board and its system of carrying on the education of the nation, from the scope of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into higher class education in Ireland. If the Commission had received power to investigate the affairs of Trinity, amongst other strange and unnatural phenomena that would come to light would be the absurd system of government that still rules the affairs of Trinity. It is a fact that the affairs and administration of the College are altogether in the hands of the Provost and seven Senior Fellows who constitute the Board. These are supposed to be men of vigour and great intellectual eminence, men who shine in the world of historical or literary research. That I cannot speak about, but what is the fact regarding their ages? I understand they are all old men, beyond the allotted span of life,—unlike the Civil Service or any other business in the world supposed to be conducted by men of vigour and men free from all physical complaints. Let me read for the information of the House the names and the ages of the distinguished gentlemen who are supposed, from day to day, to discharge the multitudinous duties entrusted to the keeping of a Board who have the name and the character and efficiency of a great University in their keeping—

	Born		Years
Traill, Anthony	Nov. 1, 1838	aged	67
Barlow, Rev. James W.	Oct. 21, 1826	,,	80
Williamson, Benjamin	1827	,,	79
Abbot, Rev. James K.	Mar. 26, 1829	,,	77
Gray, Rev. Thomas T.	1834	,,	72
Mahaffy, Rev. J. P.	July 12, 1839	,,	67
Tarleton, Francis A.	Apr. 20, 1841	,,	65
Tyrell, R. Y.	Jan. 21, 1844	,,	62

The average age of the governors is seventy-one and one-eighth years. It is absurd to think that a body of gentlemen so old and decrepit could possibly be able to attend to the affairs of such a great institution as the University of Dublin. Let the House picture to itself the position of Ireland to-day in respect to this great educational grievance. Ireland has a population of over 4,500,000, and for 4,500,000 of people Ireland has one teaching University; while on the other hand, Scotland with a lesser population, has four, England has seven, Germany has twenty-two and in addition innumerable schools of the highest possible rank. And yet there are people to be found who wonder at the backward condition of the Irish people, and they grow wild and furious at the bare mention of setting up a national University for the education of the Catholic people of Ireland. How unreasonable and inconsistent they are, surely! They object to the establishment of a truly national University in Ireland, while at the same time they freely and willingly and generously endow a college for Mahommedans in Egypt. They maintain sectarian colleges in this country. They maintain, and justly so, in the north of Ireland, a University for the education of the Presbyterians of the north. They maintain every form of education in Ireland on strictly sectarian principles. Why, in the year 1852 Her late Majesty granted a Charter providing for the University education of her Catholic subjects in Canada, where the Catholic population was only 40 per cent. as against 90 per cent. in Ireland. You endow a Jewish College in Stephen's Green, and while you do all this, you hesitate and refuse to set up and endow a truly national University for the Catholics of Ireland. We have oftentimes been told that the reason why you oppose our fair and legitimate demands is because you think we are wishful and desirous of setting up an exclusively Catholic University—one governed by Roman Catholic bishop and priests. That is a false charge to prefer against us. We have asked and we continue to demand, and shall persist in our importunity till you satisfy us, till you give us a University that will satisfy—to quote Mr. Balfour's words—"The legitimate aspirations of the Catholics," a University which in its inception and government shall be truly national and acceptable to the great mass of the Irish people. The Irish people will never accept any system which banishes religion out of the schools, and the House should bear in mind it is dealing with a county where four-fifths of the people are Catholics. And how, therefore, is it possible to disregard and set at naught the religious convictions of the people? The idea is impossible. It is simply monstrous to ask any Irish Catholic—when the time has arrived for perfecting his education—to leave his country, to leave his religion, to bid good-bye to the associations of religion and home, and to enter an institution where he finds himself in an atmosphere of rigid Protestantism. For, notwithstanding the changes effected in Trinity College within recent years, it is yet openly and aggressively a centre of Protestant thought and learning. It was founded and endowed for proselytising purposes, and the endowment included a Divinity school. After two hundred years of proscription, it is not long ago since positions of emolument were thrown open to Catholics. Yes, but some may say, "Is not all that bigotry and exclusion a thing of the past—Catholics are no longer shut out. Tests and disabilities have been removed." That is so, to a limited extent; but it is a well-known fact that the College is not acceptable or considered congenial for my co-religionists in Ireland. It was bred low and reared in Protestantism. It is Protestant in its history. It is Protestant in its customs and religious observances. It is as Protestant to-day as ever. Ninety per cent. of its students are Protestants. The Provost, the Fellows, and all the Professors are of the same religion, and consequently it is absurd and ridiculous for anybody to contend that it is suited to the wants and requirements of my fellow-countrymen. Is it not the height of madness to expect the Catholics of Ireland to be satisfied with it as a means of University education? It is, and, what is more, in face of the persistent and continual opposition offered to our claims for equality in University Life. The time has arrived at last when the leaders of public opinion in Ireland must take up a definite and determined stand in respect to the matter. And now that the way is cleared, inasmuch as the land question, slowly but gradually, is moving out of the way, it is a matter of urgent practical politics to concentrate their attention and undivided energies in having this great national question settled once and finally. Trinity, no doubt, is a great, historic institution, with long and ancient traditions behind it. It has given to the world some great and illustrious men, but as compared with its opportunities it has done very little. There is no good, however, in crying over the past. What is gone is gone and cannot be recalled. Let us look to the future. Let the new Government handle this grave and complicated problem in a brave, upright, and righteous manner. If they do so, I am almost certain the day is not far distant when our land—once a nation of poets, bards, dramatists, orators, preachers, children of wit and children of fancy—will once again regain its position amongst the most learned and scholarly on this earth.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) seconded the Motion. He said it was not possible for him to say, in the time available to-night, one-tenth of what he had intended to say, but he would state a number of facts which, he imagined, would be a revelation to hon. Members on both sides of the House with reference to Dublin University, in order to show that there was great need for thorough inquiry into the administration of that institution. During the *régime* of the late Government he put a notice on the Paper asking for a return in regard to the administration, the revenues, and the method of teaching at Trinity College. The junior Member for the City of London said that the return could not be given, and the right hon. Gentleman referred him for information on the subject to a number of documents which he named. He would give briefly the result of his researches, and he might say that he could prove his statements up to the hilt by documents. His researches went to show that Trinity College was gravely mismanaged with reference to the distribution of its finances, the appointment of teachers, and the bestowal of degrees. Speaking as a Protestant, and with no feeling of unkindness towards Trinity College, where he had himself been a public examiner, he said that under its present management it was unacceptable to the very class for whom it was intended. For one in the Protestant community who would openly approve it, nine would condemn. The number of students who received the M.A. degree in 1886 was 1,346, while in 1903 the number had declined to 938. Oxford and Cambridge Universities were filled with Protestant Irishmen who went there rather than to their own colleges. That very day at University College the election had taken place of a Protestant Irishman as master. The Chancellor of Trinity College, Lord Rosse, sent his son to Oxford. It was notorious that Trinity College was not acceptable, not only to Roman Catholics, but to what might be called the cream of the intellect, of the Protestant nobility and gentry of Ireland. Of three men who were representatives in succession of Cambridge University all were Irish, and two were closely connected by antecedents with Trinity College. Out of £66,000 per annum £20,000 was divided among eight old men—the Provost and the seven senior Fellows, whose average age was seventy-one. That was how education was promoted in Ireland. As to the Fellowship training, while it involved enormous intellectual labour it did not give to any man who got a Fellowship any better position than a man who did not. Trinity College was called a teaching University. It was nothing of the kind. A young man might go there and get a degree and never attend a lecture. More than half of them did that. But whether they passed the examination or attended the lectures, they paid exactly the same fees. The fees, having regard to the class of students, were exorbitant. In the revenues of Trinity College must be included a sum of £122,000 which was given in 1869. From that day to this no account had been given of that money. He wished to know where it had gone. The Roman Catholics of Ireland, forming three-fourths of the population, would not have anything to do with Trinity College. It was a monopolist institution which did not benefit even the class for whom it was intended. It had been converted into an Old Man's Society, and, as it at present stood, it blocked the way of higher education in Ireland. He appealed with confidence to the Chief Secretary to find a remedy for the present state of matters.

Mr. Swift MacNeill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the revenues of Trinity College, Dublin, are not used to the best advantage for the promotion of the higher education of the Irish people, and that, in view of the deplorable condition of higher education in Ireland, it is of vital and urgent importance that the control and administration of these large revenues should be so altered as to make them available for the use of the general body of the nation."—(*Mr. Duffy.*)

MR. CAMPBELL (Dublin University) thought the House would agree with him that no very great advance towards the solution of the most difficult of all Irish questions—namely, that of University education—was to be hoped for from such a Resolution as this. This question of the administration of Dublin University had already formed the subject of investigation by a Royal Commission and of frequent debate in this House, and on each and every occasion there had been a remarkable consensus of opinion in favour of the enlightened policy and wisdom of that administration. The Royal Commission of 1853 found that enormous improvements of an important character had been introduced from time to time by the authorities of Trinity College, that the general state of the University was satisfactory, and that the spirit of improvement had been especially shown in the changes that had been introduced in the course of education to adapt it to the requirements of the age. In the course of a speech on the Second Reading of the Irish Universities' Bill in 1873 Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, said he had a strong sentiment of veneration and gratitude for Trinity College, which had done for Ireland a large portion of the good which had been done for her at all; and the late Sir William Harcourt, in the course of the same debate, spoke of Dublin University as one of the most famous Universities of the world and the intellectual eye of Ireland. Mr. Pynn, the then Liberal Member for Dublin, also said that Trinity College had been the one successful institution in Ireland. In the same year, speaking in this House, Mr. William Redmond, who as a Home Ruler represented the City of Wexford, stated that the Roman Catholics of Ireland took pride in the renown of the Dublin University. That was the University of which the hon. and learned Member for South Donegal had spoken to-night. It was the University which so far back as 1794 petitioned the Irish Parliament and obtained through it permission to admit to its degrees the Roman Catholics of Ireland, anticipating by thirty years the occasion when the Imperial Parliament granted Catholic emancipation. In 1873 it came to the Imperial Parliament and obtained the abolition of all tests of every kind within the walls of the University. From that hour to this there was no prize or position of profit, emolument or government within the University, that was not open to all, without distinction, of class or creed. Three of its Fellowships had been held in recent years by members of the Presbyterian Church, and one by a distinguished member of the Roman Catholic Church. In the face of these facts, it was idle for hon. Members from Ireland to come to this House and endeavour, under a Motion of this sort, to obtain a vote in favour of a foundation on a sectarian basis. The hon. Member for South Donegal had said that there were seven senior Fellows who had entrusted to them the management of this institution and that they and the Provost had absorbed £12,000 a year of the funds of the College, but with beautiful Hibernian exaggeration the hon. Gentleman went on to increase that £12,000 to £20,000.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that what he had stated was that the senior Fellows got £11,000 odd, the Provost £2,500, and that the expenses of administration amounted to one-third of the income of the College.

MR. J. CAMPBELL said he did not know by what arithmetic £2,500 and £11,000 produced £20,000. The facts as to the payments to senior Fellows had never been kept back from the House. Returns were furnished year by year until 1874, and one was furnished in 1889. There were seven of those senior Fellows, whose names would enable the House to judge whether they were men who from age or infirmity were unfit to be entrusted with the management of an institution of this sort. They included Professor Williamson, Professor Mahaffy, Professor Tarleton, and Professor Tyrrell, all men with a European reputation for culture and scholarship, all men whose works were to-day the standard textbooks in the particular subjects in which they excelled. After some thirty years of splendid service in the cause of education the seven divided amongst them a sum of £9,900 a year, or an average income of some £1,400 a year, an amount far below what they would have earned had they devoted their abilities to commercial or professional life. It was only within recent years that there was any provision made whereby they could be pensioned. The compensation for the loss of presentation rights on the disestablishment of the Irish Church, about which inquiry had been made, was merged in the general funds of the college, subject to the permission given by a Queen's letter in 1880 to use the income of the fund for the pensioning of Fellows who became incapable of discharging their duties, provided that in no year should these pensions exceed the annual amount of £5,000. The hon. Members ought hardly to grudge to the author of "Who fears to speak of '98," the only gentleman who was in receipt of a pension under that scheme after fifty-three years, the amount he drew of £1,000 a year. It was said that the revenues had not been made available for the bulk of the Roman Catholic youth of Ireland. It was true that many distinguished Roman Catholics had received their education within the walls of Trinity College. It was true that there were on the Irish Bench and in this country many distinguished Roman Catholics who owned much to the education they received there. But it was equally true that the great majority of the Catholic youth of Ireland had not been allowed to avail themselves of the educational benefits the institution offered. Ever since 1873 every distinction, privilege, office, and honour had been open to every Irishman, but in 1869 the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland met in solemn conclave and passed this resolution, from which they had never departed—

> "We condemn the mixed system of education, whether primary, intermediate, or university, as grievously and intrinsically dangerous to the morals of Catholic youth, and we declare that to Catholics only, and under the supreme control of the Church in all things appertaining to faith and morals, can the teaching of Catholics be entrusted."

Here was the reason why the advantages of higher education freely offered since 1873 had not been availed of as they might have been. Let those who doubted it read the remarkable and powerful letter published some two months ago by Mr. Michael Davitt, an Irishman and a Catholic, who for twenty years had been a Member of this House, in which he demonstrated that the irreconcilable hostility of the Catholic Bishops had deprived him and his co-religionists of the benefit of University education for half a century. Let the saddle be put on the right horse, and let it not be said that this was due to the intolerance and bigotry of Dublin University. The University had ever been in advance of the age in this matter. This was a question affecting a great and ancient institution; he regretted that so little time was left for discussion, and he would not stand between the House and the Chief Secretary. Speaking as an Irishman, and as one proud of his native country, his hope was that the University of Dublin might yet be permitted to become in fact what in name it had been for centuries—the great University where the youth of Ireland could engage in friendly educational rivalry, and while so engaged learn by mutual association abiding sentiments of toleration and respect truly essential for national prosperity, but which they could not learn while imprisoned in rival sectarian compounds, perpetuating the religious differences of the past which had numbed and paralysed the energy of his countrymen. He hoped the House would lend no favour to an attack on Trinity College as profitless as it was ungenerous.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.), said it was impossible for him at that late hour to enter upon several of the interesting questions which had been raised and which, had time permitted, he would have gladly dealt with. He would confine himself to the essential points and to a statement of the intentions of the Government. He was rather surprised that the right hon.and learned Gentleman who had just sat down should have spoken of a 'crusade" against Trinity College. It seemed to him that the remarks about Trinity College were not couched in any hostile or angry spirit, and he certainly did not put that construction upon them. It seemed to him most natural that hon. Members from Ireland, whatever their religious and political opinions were, should be interested in the welfare of so great an institution, which was an ornament to Dublin and to the whole of Ireland, and should wish that this ancient centre of intellectual life should again fill the place it ought to fill in the intellectual and moral life of the country. The complaints made against the college had not, after all, been very serious. It had been alleged that it was a mistake to have a college and a University governed by a body of eight men all advanced in life, that many Protestants left Ireland to go to Universities elsewhere, and that in some respects the arrangements for awarding Fellowships were not satisfactory. The hon. Member for South Donegal observed that these gentlemen had, at any rate, learned the art of living long. He thought every one's experience would convince him that there was nothing that kept a man so long in life as the possession of a good place from which he was keeping somebody else. The hon. Gentleman complained that Irishmen went to English Universities. The same thing was found in Scotland. The fact was that the English Universities were able to afford inducements which drew people away from smaller and poorer countries. That was a fact in modern life which they regretted, but which it was beyond their power to control. All that Dublin could do was so to arrange her endowments and organise her teaching as always to have a certain number of first-rate men whose presence would attract students from England and Scotland. As to the relation of Trinity College to Roman Catholics, the hon. Member for South Galway was not quite correct in saying that Trinity College had always been strictly Protestant. It was not so in the eighteenth century during the Commonwealth, and then for a considerable period it bade fair to be the centre of Catholic as well as Protestant life. The first period, unfortunately, came to an end at the time of Archbishop Laud, and the second period was about 1795. After that Trinity College, instead of being a meeting place for different schools and parties where young men might form friendships which would have averted political antagonisms, became the fortress of one religious sect. Trinity College had not been inquired into since the year 1853, when the last Commission reported. Within that period there had been four Commissions of inquiry into the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and three Commissions of inquiry into the Universities of Scotland. Six new Universities had been founded in England, and there had been a complete revolution in English University life. There had been an increase in the number of students in English Universities from a little over 2,300 in 1865 to 13,000 in the present year. That extraordinary revolution in University life in this country had been accompanied by the inquiries to which he had referred, and by alterations in the statutes and arrangements of the English and Scottish Universities, due to the development of new subjects of study and research. Since 1853, with the partial exception of an inquiry into a particular class of funds in 1878, there had been no inquiry with regard to Trinity College, Dublin. That fact had convinced him that *primâ facie* there was a strong case for a new inquiry into the arrangements of Trinity College. He thought that case was strengthened by the consideration that the recognition of new studies, especially scientific studies, was not adequate in the Fellowship examinations, that the system of government seemed antiquated, and that there had been some diminution in the number of students as compared with 1880–85. In these circumstances, with no imputation whatever upon Trinity College, against which he did not think any charge ought to be brought, and which had shown itself thoroughly loyal in every respect to the principles which it adopted in 1873, when the Abolition of Tests

Act was passed, after all these years. and after all that had been done in England and Scotland, he thought the time had come when there ought to be an inquiry into Trinity College also. He might say he had arrived at that conclusion independently, and should have announced it before long, even if this Motion had not given a proper opportunity for announcing it. The inquiry ought to deal with the revenues of the College, and the manner in which they were applied, the government and the administration of the College and the University, the teaching staff and methods, the system of examinations, and the rewards which successful students obtained. He thought it would necessarily also deal with the method of awarding the Fellowships, and, of course, one would not exclude from the purview of such an inquiry the general consideration of the place which Trinity College occupied in Ireland in the higher education of the country. He thought the inquiry ought to be conducted by a small Commission, which was more likely to be effective for this purpose, and by a non-political Commission, because it would not have any political question to consider, and it ought to act promptly. The last thing he personally desired was to postpone any attempt that any one might make to deal with the Irish University question at large by the creation of another Commission which would last for a long time, take a great deal of evidence, and practically put off the approach of this question for a greater time than any of them desired. After what he had said, he thought he might fairly ask the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion. The object of the hon. Member had been attained; he had given a statement which he trusted would be satisfactory to the hon. Member as regarded the course which the Government proposed to adopt, and he promised him that, as soon as it was possible to institute this inquiry, he would endeavour to do so. He hoped the inquiry, which he had reason to believe would not be unacceptable to the authorities of Trinity College—it was not designed in a hostile spirit to them, and he did not think they would take it in any such spirit—would have the effect of strengthening Trinity College, of improving it in any point in which it was desirable that it should be improved, of enlarging its range and giving it a wider influence on the Irish people, and of enabling it to discharge its duties to the Irish people in a manner worthy of the high standard of teaching it had always maintained, and of the many illustrious names with which it had been associated.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said it was exceedingly difficult for his colleagues and himself to express in the time at their disposal a considered opinion on the speech of the right hon. the Chief Secretary. But he felt bound to say that they viewed with the most intense distrust the appointment of Commissions, and were it not for the concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman, in which he said his intention was that it should be a small Commission to meet at once and to report rapidly on a limited reference, he could not have advised his hon. friend, as he did now, to withdraw his Motion. As the same time he must safeguard himself by saying that without further examination, and without knowing a little more about the exact reference to the Commission, and something about those who were to be appointed upon it, he could take no responsibility for it whatever.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said that if it was meant by referring the question to a Commission to turn Trinity College into a different kind of University for the purpose of satisfying sectarian ambition in Ireland, he feared that the right hon. Gentleman's scheme would not be acceptable to Trinity College. Of course, however, it was impossible, until one saw the scheme, to express an opinion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS, ETC.

Select Committee appointed to inquire into the number, bulk, cost, and circulation of the documents printed by Order of this House, or presented to it through public departments, and to report what reductions, if any, can be made thereon.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of Mr. Victor Cavendish, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Maddison, Mr. W. F. D. Smith, and Mr. Toulmin.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum. —(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

CABS AND OMNIBUSES (METROPOLIS).

Select Committee appointed to inquire into the following questions relating to Cabs and Omnibuses in the Metropolis:—(1) The means to be adopted to prevent the use of drivers' and conductors' badges and licences by unlicensed persons, and the fees charged for those badges and licences; (2) the restrictions imposed on Cabs when not carrying passengers; (3) the restrictions imposed by railway companies on the admission of Cabs to their premises; (4) the structural requirements to be enforced with regard to Cabs and Omnibuses driven by mechanical power; (5) The scale of Cab fares, and particularly the question of the extension of the four-mile radius, and modifications (if any) to be made in the case of Cabs carrying taxameters.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Allen Baker, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. G. A. Gibbs, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, Mr. Keswick, Mr. Lambton, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Norman, Mr. Partington, Sir Samuel Scott, Mr. Stanger, Mr. Steadman, and Mr. Wiles.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum. —(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

SUPPLY [19TH MARCH] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [20th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That a sum, not exceeding £10,220,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, &c., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907.' "

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) continuing his speech, which had been interrupted by the suspension of the sitting at half-past seven, said he intervened simply to make a few remarks upon the pay and allowances of our Regular soldiers. His object was to appeal from the civilian point of view to the Secretary of State for War to do something to improve the lot of the common soldier, and at the point when he finished his service not to leave him to join what appeared to be the only occupation open to him, the ranks of the casual labourer. The great reason why no respectable parent could with equanimity see a son join the Army was that he knew that the lad's life was practically spoiled, and that after a few years in the Army he would be thrown adrift without a trade. In Manchester, Birmingham, and other large cities, they were trying to find employment for men who were out of work, and the retired soldier was one of their greatest and most pitiable difficulties. It was a pitiable system under which one had to tell a man of good physique and good character that there was nothing for him to do but casual labour. We wanted good men for the Army, and to get them they must be treated as human beings. At present they did not get that treatment, and there was no railway company or private firm who would treat their employés as we did our soldiers. The pay and emoluments of the soldier compared very badly with those of the sailor who left the Navy with a training and was a handy man who generally found something to do. There was no such opportunity for the soldier. He hoped the whole question of the reorganisation of the Army would be taken into consideration.

Question put, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS [19TH MARCH]

Resolutions reported; 1. " That,—towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £120,580 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom." 2. " That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, the sum of £42,855,900 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. M'Kenna.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

" To apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the years ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand nine hundred and six and one thousand nine hundred and seven," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time this day.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 21*st March*, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

For County of Suffolk (North Eastern or Eye Division), in the room of Francis Seymour Stevenson, esquire (Manor of Northstead).

Borough of Leicester. Henry Broadhurst, esquire (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heacham Water Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Edinburgh Corporation Bill, "To authorise the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council of the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh to make and maintain Tramways; to construct works and acquire lands; to incorporate the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, Edinburgh; to provide for the registration of employment agencies; to amend the Edinburgh Municipal and Police Acts; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Burry Port Gas and Improvement Bill. Order [27th February] that the Burry Port Gas and Improvement Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*)

Divorce Bills. Ordered, That the Select Committee on Divorce Bills do consist of the following Members—Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Joseph Leese, the Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. D. Brynmor Jones, Sir Edward Carson, and Mr. G. Cave.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Lyme Regis, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Donside, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

Petition of the Home Counties Union of Women's Liberal Association, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Abbess Roding (two); Aberford; Ancoats; Atherton; Bechermet; Belton (two); Bicton; Blackburn; Brockdish (two); Calder Vale (two); Canterbury; Caton and Hornby; Chastleton; Chipping Norton (five); Chrishall (two); Denton St. Ann's (two); Edgeside (two); Farnworth; Fittleton; Gidleigh; Great Eccleston; Great Maplestead; Halwell; Hawkshaw; Howe Bridge; Inskip (two); Kearsley (two); Kirby Bedon; Langley; Little Hulton (three); Locking (two); Manchester (two); Navestock; Pendleton; Priston; Ratcliffe; Ramsbottom; St. Michael's on Wyre (two); Shrewsbury; Southbourne on Sea; Staple; Taunton; Weaste; Whalton; and, Worth Matravers; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition; From Grimsby (two); and Lincoln; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1905, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH TEACHERS PENSION RULES, 1906.

Copy presented, of Rules under Section 11 of the National School Teachers'

(Ireland) Act, 1879 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 15th March 1906, modifying the Treasury Minute of 27th May, 1884, as to addition of years for purpose of pension to actual length of service of persons appointed to the office of Clerk of the Upper Division in the Charity Commission [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1859 AND 1876.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 15th March, 1906, declaring Aden and its vicinity to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report No. 482 (St. Lucia, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Copy presented, of Indenture Supplemental to Agreement of 2nd February 1905, between His Majesty's Postmaster-General and the National Telephone Company, Limited [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LIGHTS UPON VEHICLES).

Address for "Return showing the bylaws made by the councils of counties and boroughs in England and Wales as to Lights upon Vehicles, giving particulars, as far as possible, on the points of difference therein."—(*Mr. Marnham.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Stamping of Documents at Provincial Post Offices.

MR. BARKER (Penrhyn and Falmouth): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will provide facilities for stamping documents in county boroughs, the present method of handing in such documents at a post office for transmission to London being attended with inconvenience and delay, especially in the case of ships, which have often been well on the voyage before the documents were available.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The matter is one that concerns the Board of Inland Revenue and not the Post Office. Facilities of the kind desired are already at twenty-six places outside London (see List annexed); whether, in fact, the amount of business to be transacted appears to justify the cost of providing stamping facilities. Even in places where such facilities are not provided, documents deposited for stamping can, as a rule, be reclaimed not later than the second day after being handed in, and it is not found in practice that inconvenience results from this short delay.

INLAND REVENUE.

LIST OF PROVISIONAL STAMPING CENTRES.

England:

Birmingham.
Bolton.
Bradford, Yorks.
Brighton.
Bristol.
Cardiff.
Derby.
Hull.
Leeds.
Leicester.
Liverpool.
Manchester.
Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Nottingham.
Portsmouth.
Sheffield.
Southampton.
Sunderland.
Wakefield (Deeds for registration).
Wolverhampton.
York.

Scotland:

Edinburgh.
Glasgow.

Ireland:

Belfast.
Cork.
Dublin.

Wheat Prices.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state the average prices of imported wheat, per quarter, in 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905, in Germany, inclusive and exclusive of the German duty on such imported wheat; and the amounts of that German duty on imported wheat, per quarter, for the years referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statement gives the information asked for:—

Years.	Average prices of imported wheat in Germany. Per quarter.		Amount of Customs duty levied on imported wheat in Germany. Per quarter.
	Inclusive of import duty.	Exclusive of import duty.	
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1901	36 5	28 10	7 7
1902	36 1	28 6	7 7
1903	36 1	28 6	7 7
1904	37 10	30 3	7 7
1905	38 6	30 11	7 7

Note.—The average import prices are given in the German official statistics, exclusive of import duty. The figures in column 1 have, therefore, been obtained by adding the amount of the import duty to the prices stated in the German Returns.

Irish Provident Assurance Company—Board of Trade Investigation.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the investigation into the affairs of the Irish Provident Assurance Company has yet been concluded; and, if so, will he state the result.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George*): Certain investigations into the affairs of the company were undertaken by the authorities at Dublin. The Board of Trade have recently learnt that it has been decided that no evidence existed to justify proceedings being taken by the authorities against the company. As a result of the investigation by the Board of Trade, the Department are advised that the company is not empowered to transact life assurance business, but the Board have also been informed that the company proposes that it should transact such business in conjunction with a life assurance company, constituted last year under the Companies' Acts, which has made the statutory deposit of £20,000. If, however, the hon. Member can bring to the notice of the Board of Trade evidence that the Irish Provident Assurance Company are themselves still carrying on business which could be described as life assurance, the question of taking proceedings against them will be considered.

Foreign Rails for British-owned Argentine Railways.

Mr. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that orders for over 100,000 tons of rails have recently been placed in the United States of America by British-owned Argentine railways; whether he can state what quantities of rails and steel sleepers for British-owned Argentine railway companies have recently been purchased from German and Belgian manufacturers; and whether he can state the reasons for these railway companies placing their orders in foreign countries instead of in Great Britain as hitherto.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I have no official information to the effect stated, but I have heard rumours of some arrangements made by an international rail syndicate for the division of the world's market for rails, whereby

I believe, inter alia, British rail-makers were to be secured (with certain reserves) from foreign competition in the markets of the British Empire, and the American manufacturers in those of North and South America. I am unable to say how far any such arrangement is actually carried out, or whether Argentine railway companies have recently purchased rails and steel sleepers from German or Belgian manufacturers.

MR. HOUSTON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if there is official information to the effect that British railmakers have agreed with the American railmakers to allow orders for Argentine rails (on account of English companies) to be secured by the Americans, in consideration of their refraining from sending rails to this country and selling them at a price with which British makers could not compete; and, if there is such or any information in connection therewith, will he lay the same upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I must refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his previous Question on the same subject.

Housekeeper of Dublin Custom House.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the person who discharges the duty of housekeeper in the Dublin Custom House is permanently appointed to the position, or whether the office is regarded as vacant; and, if so, how long has the vacancy existed, and if it is the intention of the Customs authorities to appoint to the position an official from London who has hitherto had no connection with the Dublin Custom House.

(*Answered by Mr. George Whiteley.*) The office in question was vacated on the 7th December last. The present occupant has only a temporary tenure, pending a settlement, which is now being considered, of the duties and emoluments attaching to the post. I am not yet in a position to say what definite appointment to this vacancy will be made.

Entry of Dartmouth and Osborne Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that under the old system of limited competition for cadetships at Dartmouth there has only been a withdrawal of two cadets out of 191 entered, although paragraph 17 of the regulations respecting naval cadets lays down that it is to be distinctly understood that the period of training is a time of probation; and whether, having regard to the fact that during the same period, of 222 boys entered at Osborne under the new system 32 have been withdrawn, the Admiralty will reconsider the present scheme of entry, since each cadet lost costs the country, according to official figures, £98 per annum.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The figures quoted have already been given in reply to a Question in this House; and the Answer to the second Question is in the negative.

Manufacture of Turbine Machinery for War Vessels.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the contemplated employment of steam turbines in war vessels, he can state whether provision is being made in the dockyards of suitable workshops and machinery for their manufacture; or whether it is proposed to rely entirely on private firms to supply them.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is proposed to rely on private firms for the supply of steam turbines, as in the case of all other propelling machinery.

Compensation for Destruction of Fishing Gear by Warships in the Arran Islands.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the loss and destruction of nets, mooring gear, and fishing apparatus sustained by the Arran Island fishermen, on account of three English battleships tearing through their fishing grounds on the morning of the 15th March; and whether, in view of the poverty of the fishermen, and that they are now practically destitute and without the means of following their livelihood, he will at once take steps to compensate them for the injury done.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It appears, from the report received this morning, that after the "Canopus" had anchored in Galway Bay the turn of the tide drifted some fishing nets across her bows. In clearing the nets they became so torn as to be rendered useless. The Admiralty have considered the question of compensation and propose to award the sum asked for.

Metropolitan Volunteers — The Brigade System.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War if, having regard to the opportunities for consecutive training of the 30,000 Volunteers in London throughout the year and to the zeal of all ranks, the brigade system recommended by the Norfolk Commission, and about to be adopted in provincial districts, will also be established in the metropolitan area.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is not proposed at present to extend the system by which each brigade of Volunteers will have a commander to itself to those brigades which are under regiments of Foot Guards. The advisability of such extension will, however, be carefully considered.

Religious Persuasions of Staff of Royal Hibernian Military School.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware, having regard to the fact that in a recent notice of a vacancy in the office of drill gun instructor in the Hibernian Military School, Dublin, Lord Grenfell, in inviting applications for the appointment, stated that membership of the Church of England was a necessary qualification for candidature, that every post of emolument in that institution, from the position of commandant to that of gatekeeper, is filled by a member of the Church of England or some other Protestant communion, no member of the staff being a Catholic; and what explanation, if any, has he to give for this exclusion of Catholics from positions in a school for the education of the sons of Irish soldiers, the great majority of whom are members of the Catholic faith.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are eighty-three appointments at the Royal Hibernian Military School which carry emoluments: of these forty-eight are held by Roman Catholics, twenty-eight by members of the Church of England, five by Presbyterians, and two by Wesleyans.

Purchase of Land by the War Office in Monmouthshire.

Colonel HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office is in negotiation, or has been in negotiation, for the purchase of any lands in the parishes of Monmouth or of Wonastow, in the County of Monmouth, adjoining the Monmouth rifle range.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Certain negotiations were in progress concerning the acquisition of firing rights over land adjoining this range, but, as no money was available, the matter has dropped.

Sale of Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): To ask the Secretary of State for War if the Government has sold or leased the Sparkbrook Royal Small Arms Factory to a private company.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Negotiations have been practically completed for the sale of Sparkbrook Royal Small Arms Factory to a private company.

The Imperial Yeomanry—Re-engagement System.

Mr. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will cause some alteration to be made in the system of re-engagement now in force in the Imperial Yeomanry, with a view to retain the good men as long as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The system of re-engagement now in force was introduced, at the request of a large majority of commanding officers, in order to meet the convenience of the old yeomen and with the deliberate view of so retaining the good men. There is, therefore, no intention of altering the system.

The Proposed Labourers (Ireland) Bill.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he expects to introduce the promised Labourers (Ireland) Bill, the chief object of which is the cheapening and simplifying of the present Acts; and whether in drafting the Bill he will include in it provisions whereby labourers may be facilitated and encouraged to purchase their cottages and land by a series of reasonable annual instalments.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) It is impossible for me at present to fix a date for the introduction of the Labourers (Ireland) Bill, nor can I make any statement as to its provisions.

Cost of Erection and Loans on Workmen's Houses in Ireland.

MR. BARRIE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in order to encourage urban authorities in Ireland to proceed with the building of workmen's houses in towns, in many cases urgently required, he is prepared to recommend the advancing of the necessary funds at the rate for interest of 3¼ per cent. per annum, instead of the 3¾ per cent. at present asked; and whether he will instruct the Local Government Board to modify their architectural requirements for such houses, their requirements in the past adding much to the cost of the schemes put forward by urban authorities.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The rates of interest for loans obtained by local authorities from public funds are fixed from time to time by the Treasury, regard being had to the state of the money market. There is, however, nothing to prevent such authorities from borrowing in the open market if by so doing they can secure better terms. I am advised that the architectural requirements of the Local Government Board have been framed with due regard to economy, and are only such as are necessary to secure healthy and well-constructed dwellings.

Monthly Return of Irish Emigration.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Registrar-General for Ireland will arrange for a monthly Return of Irish emigration to be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The reply is in the affirmative.

Fees Collected in Irish Model Schools.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Treasury have foregone their claim to any part of the school fees collected in the Irish model schools; and, if so, will the Commissioners of National Education distribute the fees collected in each model school among the teachers of that school, as is the practice in all ordinary national schools; or will they use part of this money in paying house rent for female teachers who have not been provided with residences, and distribute the remainder among the staffs of the various model schools where very small fees are collected; and will the teachers get a share as in those schools where considerable sums are received.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Last year the Treasury agreed to forego their claim to the school fees collected from model school pupils, and sanctioned the following rules for payments to model school teachers out of such fees: (1.) To each head mistress appointed since 1st April 1900 £20 per annum as an allowance for a residence; in the case of a head mistress appointed as such after 1st April 1900, if she carried over from the old system model school supplementary salary gained as assistant before that date, the allowance for residence shall be only the excess, if any, of £20 above the amount so carried over; (2.) to each head master and head mistress appointed since 1st April 1900 £10 per annum, to stand in the place of endowment or local aid; (3.) the residue to be distributed among all the teachers (head teachers and assistants) at present serving, or hereafter appointed, in model schools, on the principle that the head teacher shall receive twice the share of an assistant. The school fees collected from model school pupils, between 1st April 1905 and 31st December 1905, have been paid to the model school teachers in accordance with these regulations.

Dromahane National School—Absence of Mr. T. Mullane.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education (Ireland) received a memorial from the parents of children attending the national school, Dromahane, Mallow, in August 1905, complaining of the frequent absence from the school of the teacher, Mr. T. Mullane, in connection with repeated prosecutions of Mrs. O'Ragan, an evicted tenant, who has been sentenced to two terms of imprisonment; and, if so, what reply was sent by the Commissioners; and whether, in view of the ill-feeling excited in the locality by this land dispute, the Commissioners will make representation to the teacher, with a view to submitting the case to arbitration, as suggested by the school manager, Father Shinnick, and others.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that on the 30th August, 1905, they received from some of the parents of the pupils a memorial calling attention to Mr. Mullane's connection with land disputes. The Commissioners referred the memorial to the senior inspector for inquiry, and, upon consideration of his report, they decided to take no action in the matter. There has been no further correspondence, and the Commissioners have no knowledge of the suggested arbitration referred to in the Question.

Colonial Military Expenditure.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House the latest information in his possession as to the expenditure on military purposes of the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, and the Colonies of New Zealand, the Cape of Good Hope, and Natal.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Expenditure on Military and Naval purposes of the self-governing Colonies:—

Year ended.	Colony.	Expenditure on Colonial forces and works and armaments.		Contributions to Imperial garrison and Navy.	
		Military.	Naval.	Military.	Naval.
		£	£	£	£
30th June, 1904 -	Canada - - -	814,329	—	22,600	—
30th June, 1904 -	Australia - -	615,758	43,673	—	196,226
31st March, 1905 -	New Zealand -	234,469	742	—	40,742
30th June, 1905 -	Cape of Good Hope	229,786†	—	—	50,000
30th June, 1904 -	Natal - - -	341,016‡	—	4,000	25,628

† Exclusive of expenditure for Cape Mounted Police (£343 14s. 6d.).

‡ Inclusive of reserve and district police (£216,762).

Later information can probably be obtained in about a week, by telegraphing, if the right hon. Member thinks this necessary.

Victorian Gold Mining Return.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies will he say whether a Return, issued on 19th March, giving the yield of Victorian gold mines per ton of ore milled, includes or does not include tailings, concentrates, and silver.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Return does not include tailings, concentrates, and silver.

Pay of Irish Survey Labourers.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will arrange that the Irish survey labourers and chain men will receive equal pay to that given to men in similar positions in England; whether he is aware that some of the Southampton unskilled labourers with a fixed abode receive higher wages than the Irish field sections who move from station to station; and whether this inequality of pay will be considered and remedied.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The wages paid to survey labourers in the field are the same in Ireland as in Great Britain, with the exception of those at Southampton, where slightly higher rates are paid owing to the higher rate of wages generally paid for unskilled labour in the locality.

Board of Agriculture Inspectors.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow College): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the fact that there are at present forty-three lay inspectors in the animals' division of the department who administer the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, he will give a preference to veterinarians for these appointments if he can get them on the same terms as the lay inspectors; and will he explain why veterinary surgeons are not appointed to these positions.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The question of the employment of veterinary surgeons on the non-professional business which our inspectors are called upon to perform has often been considered, but experience has shown that, as a rule, they are not so well suited to the work as men possessing qualification of a more general character. The non-professional inspectors are selected after personal inquiry and scrutiny by the President of the Board for the time being, and nearly all of them possess a knowledge or have had practical experience of agriculture.

Superannuation of Local Government Officials.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can propose or facilitate legislation to secure superannuation for local government officials upon similar lines to the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I could not take steps for the purpose suggested. Indeed it appears to me that the subject of superannuation of local government officers would require careful consideration before legislation on the subject could be proposed.

Registered Trading Firms without Votes.

Mr. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can grant a Return showing in the municipalities of Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham, West Ham, Holborn, and Sheffield, theeaggregate rateable value, the number of registered trading firms who have no municipal vote, owing to their incorporation under the Companies Acts, and the aggregate rateable value of such trading companies.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) As regards Glasgow, the matter is one for my right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland. So far as the other places mentioned are concerned, I shall be happy to give a Return of the kind suggested, and I will communicate with my hon. friend as to its form.

Pay of Royal Dockyards Writing Staff.

Mr. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when he will be able to announce the revision of the pay of the writing staff of the Royal Dockyards, referred to in page 98 of the Naval Estimates 1905–6, and again in the Navy Estimates 1906–7; and whether the revision will include the granting of the long-standing request of the naval writers to have an opportunity of attaining to warrant rank.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robinson.*) It is hoped to publish at an early date the result of the inquiry into the pay and position of the civilian writers in the dockyard. This inquiry had no reference to the naval writers, and the Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Distribution of Orders for Armour Plate.

MR. WALTERS (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary to the Anmiralty whether he will take steps to insure the distribution of orders for armour plate over a longer period of the year, so as to avoid the working of overtime and so as to afford more regular and continuous employment to the workmen engaged in this trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson*). Every endeavour is and will be made to regulate the orders to the armour-plate manufacturers in such a way as to render overtime unnecessary.

Entrance Examination for Naval Cadets.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty who carried out the examinations under the old and new systems of entry for naval cadetships, and what fees are charged to the parents respectively; what proportion of candidates are nominated for each vacancy under each system; and whether the marks obtained at examinations are published in each case in order to preclude any possibility of favouritism after nominations have been awarded.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson*). The literary examinations under the old system of entry were undertaken by the Civil Service Commissioners. Under the new system they are managed by the Oxford and Cambridge Board. The medical examinations have always been performed by the Medical Director General of the Navy and his staff. The fees charged to parents under the old system were £1 for each of three possible examinations; and, under the new system, £2 for the one qualifying examination. There is no fixed proportion of candidates chosen to attend the examinations. No marks are published in the case of the cadets entered under the new scheme. There is no such possibility as is suggested in the last part of the Question.

Promotion of Custom House Assistant Clerks.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the duty of preparing the Board of Trade Returns in the Statistical Department of the Custom House devolves mainly upon assistant clerks; and, if so, whether he is disposed to grant to such officers of this class as may be considered worthy of promotion to higher posts, facilities equal to those enjoyed by clerks of the same grade serving in other Government offices.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The duty of preparing the Board of Trade Returns in the Statistical Department of the Custom House devolves mainly upon assistant clerks, so far as the routine work is concerned, but their work is supervised at every stage by officers of higher rank. A memorial from the tabulator section of the assistant clerks is now under the consideration of the Treasury. No decision has yet been come to, but I must not be taken to admit that the advantages enjoyed by the assistant clerks in the Statistical Department are inferior to those of the same grade in the service generally.

Position of Temporary Civil Assistants in the Ordnance Survey.

MR. GIBBS: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will say when he will be able to make a public statement on the question of the position of the temporary civil assistants in the Ordnance Survey.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna*): I have nothing at present to add to the Answer which I gave the hon. Member on the 14th instant. †

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1229.

Clubs and the Licensing Act.

Mr. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a number of clubs have been and are being formed throughout the country, nominally for social and political purposes, but really for drinking and for evasion of the Licensing Act; and whether His Majesty's Government can take any steps by administering or amending the law to check the progress of this grave evil.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) If any person is in possession of information that the provisions of the Licensing Act of 1902 in regard to clubs have been contravened he can himself take proceedings or move the police to do so. Whether the law requires strengthening is certainly a question for consideration in connection with licensing legislation.

Irish Land Purchase—Assessment of Income Tax.

Mr. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether occupiers of land who have purchased their holdings under the Land Purchase Acts in Ireland are liable to be assessed or to pay Income Tax under Schedule A on that portion of the annuity which is classed as interest as distinguished from sinking fund; and, if, so assessed, they have paid Income Tax on the full amount of the annuity, whether they are entitled to reimbursement by the Land Commission or the Treasury on so much of the annuity as may be regarded as interest on borrowed money and not repayment of capital.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Occupiers of land who have purchased their holdings under the Land Purchase Acts in Ireland are primarily liable to be assessed on the annual value of their holdings, but no charge is made where the tenant purchaser's total income from all sources is proved to be less than £160. Where a tenant purchaser's total income from all sources is not proved to be less than £160, his holding is charged to Income Tax on the annual value; but, as the purchase annuity payable to the Land Commission is paid without deduction of Income Tax, it is the practice of the Inland Revenue Department, where possible, to reduce the assessment by the amount of the interest included in the annuity. If in any case reduction has not been granted prior to payment of the tax, the tenant purchaser can obtain a refund by applying to the Surveyor of Taxes for the district in which the property is situated.

Army Annual Bill—Committee Stage.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for War when it is proposed to take the Committee stage of the Army (Annual) Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As the Bill has not yet been read a second time, I am afraid it is impossible for me to say when the Committee stage can be reached.

Martial Law in Crete.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any Reports as to recent administration of so-called martial law by the British force in Crete towards insurgents should be the subject of inquiry from the Foreign Office or from the War Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Any inquiry as to the results of the administration of martial law under the Consul General, who is not responsible to the War Office, would appear to be a matter for the Foreign Office. From the reports received the administration, so far as the British troops and the section for which they are responsible are concerned, has been entirely satisfactory.

Army Remounts in South Africa.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any, and, if so, what steps have been taken to improve the supply and the quality of remounts for the troops in South Africa.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) 216 horses were sent out from England and Canada last year, and arrangements are being made to supply 1,000 from overseas this year. This is the only method of supply at present available, but it is understood that the Orange River Colony is taking action in the matter of breeding horses in South Africa.

Procedure Committee and Withdrawal of Strangers during Divisions.

Mr. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Committee on Procedure will be invited to consider the desirability of allowing strangers sitting beneath the Gallery to retain their seats during divisions.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I do not know that this is a question that comes within the purview of the Committee on Procedure. I sympathise with the hon. Member's object, and I will consult the authorities of the House as to what steps can be taken to meet his views.

Troops under Control of Colonial and Foreign Offices.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the number and cost of the forces having an organisation in troops or battalions or gun detachments, now under the control of the Colonial Office and Foreign Office respectively, or under the control of His Majesty's Government exercised otherwise than through the War Office or the Government of India.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The number and cost of forces having an organisation in troops or battalions or gun detachments, now under the control of the Colonial Office (that is, exclusive of the self-governing Colonies of Canada, Australia, Cape Colony, and Natal; and Bermuda and Malta, where the troops are paid from Army funds), are as follows:—Total number, 47,920; total cost, £3,378,560. These figures include the South African Constabulary (4,500 men), for whom provision is made from Colonial funds (£1,317,755). There are no longer any forces under the control of the Foreign Office. There are no other forces under the control of his Majesty's Government exercised otherwise than through the War Office or the Government of India.

Heavy Motor Traffic on Highways.

Mr. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government will inform the House if they propose to introduce, during the present session or in an early session of Parliament, legislation to deal with the question of the extraordinary traffic on highways, caused by the increase of heavy motors and traction engines using such roads, and to confer greater powers upon local authorities in respect of such traffic.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The Government do not contemplate proposing any legislation on the subject this session, and they cannot make any promise as regards next session.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Dartmouth Cadetships.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that under the old system of limited competition for cadetships at Dartmouth there has only been a withdrawal of two cadets out of 191 entered, although paragraph 17 of the regulations respecting naval cadets lays down that it is to be distinctly understood that the period of training is a time of probation; and whether, having regard to the fact that during the same period, of 222 boys entered at Osborne under the new system 32 have been withdrawn, the Admiralty will reconsider the present scheme of entry, since each cadet lost costs the country, according to official figures, £98 per annum.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): The figures quoted have already been given in reply to a Question in this House; and the Answer to the second Question is in the negative

Steam Turbines for War Vessels.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the contemplated employment of steam turbines in war vessels, he can state whether provision is being made in the dockyards of suitable workshops and machinery for their manufacture; or whether it is proposed to rely entirely on private firms to supply them.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It is proposed to rely on private firms for the supply of steam turbines, as in the case of all other propelling machinery.

Destruction of Arran Fishermen's Nets by British Battleships.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the loss and destruction of nets, mooring gear, and fishing apparatus sustained by the Arran Island fishermen, on account of three English battleships tearing through their fishing grounds on the morning of the 15th March; and whether, in view of the poverty of the fishermen, and that they are now practically destitute and without the means of following their livelihood, he will at once take steps to compensate them for the injury done.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It appears from the report received this morning that, after the "Canopus" had anchored in Galway Bay, the turn of the tide drifted some fishing nets across her bows. In clearing the nets, they became so torn as to be rendered useless. The Admiralty have considered the question of compensation, and propose to award the sum asked for.

Transvaal Loan.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the names of the financial houses who undertook to raise the £10,000,000 Transvaal loan.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The names of the South African firms who undertook to guarantee the issue of the first instalment of £10,000,000 of the war loan of £30,000,000 are given at page 3 of Cd. 1905.

Indian Coolies and the Transvaal Mines.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government are willing to sanction the importation of Indian coolies into the Transvaal on the terms of the British Guiana Ordinance.

MR. CHURCHILL: His Majesty's Government has not received any application from the Transvaal Government for the introduction of Indian coolies on the terms referred to by the hon. Member, and it is impossible to state beforehand the manner in which such an application would be dealt with.

Illegal Flogging of Chinese Coolies.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether coolies who have been illegally flogged in South Africa are entitled to recover damages for assault from any person or persons; and, if so, whether the Secretary of State will undertake that they shall be informed of the nature of their remedy and furnished with the necessary facilities for prosecuting it.

MR. CHURCHILL: A coolie is entitled to recover damages for illegal assault. Under the Labour Importation Ordinance of 1904, it is part of the duty of the superintendent and inspectors to inquire into any complaint which a coolie may have to make. In inquiring into any complaint, no doubt the superintendent or inspector would inform the coolie of any civil remedy open to him. The Secretary of State considers that in these circumstances it is not necessary to make any special notification to the coolies on the subject.

Dinuzulu.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the recent circulation of charges of treasonable intent against the Zulu chief, Dinuzulu; and whether, in view of the formal complaints of the Natal authorities in the past, that such charges against that chief are unfounded and mischievous, his department will confer with the Natal Government, with a view to taking proceedings against the person or persons now found to be responsible.

MR. CHURCHILL: I presume that the hon. Member refers to reports in the newspaper Press. The Natal Government are satisfied as to the loyalty of

Dinuzulu and his people, and it is for that Government to decide whether it is desirable, and, if so, whether it is possible to take such proceedings as the hon. Member suggests. The Secretary of State does not feel called upon to intervene in the matter.

Kaffir Disturbances in Natal.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the number of natives killed by order of court martial or otherwise in connection with the native disturbances in Natal; and how far the forces of the Crown have been employed either in enforcing the demand for a poll tax, or in repressing disturbances arising out of such demand.

MR. CHURCHILL: Up to the present I have only been informed of two natives having been shot after trial by court martial for assisting and taking part in the murder of an inspector and trooper of the Natal European Police Force. The battalion of Imperial troops which has been sent to Natal has not been actively employed in connection with the disturbances.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information showing that the native unrest in South Africa is being manufactured in order to provide a pretext for taking from the natives the reservation lands set apart for them.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. The Secretary of State certainly has no such information.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: May I ask whether information which renders possible such an inference of corrupt motives is contrary to the official information, and therefore, presumably, contrary to the fact?

MR. CHURCHILL: I said the Secretary of State had no information which would tend to support the stories inquired of by the hon. Member in his Question. I do not gather what further statement the hon. Member requires. We have no information on the subject.

Northern Nigeria Disturbances.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it has been decided to despatch an expedition against the Emir of Hadeija, in Northern Nigeria; what force will be necessary, and what are the circumstances which have rendered this step necessary.

MR. CHURCHILL: Sir F. Lugard has reported that the attitude of a section of the people of Hadeija, which threatens to disturb the peace, makes it advisable to arrest the leaders and for that purpose to strengthen the force which is already stationed there. He has been authorised to strengthen the force accordingly, but it is hoped that the object may be obtained without actual fighting. The strength of the increased force will be about 500 men of the Northern Nigeria Regiment of the West African Frontier Force.

Indo-China and Servian Trade Reports.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Report on the trade of Indo-China in 1903–4, and on the trade of Servia in 1904, were not published until February 1906; and whether there is any explantion of the delay in the issue of these Reports.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) (for Sir Edward Grey): In the case of Indo-China the author of the Report which was published in January, not February, explained that he had found great difficulty in obtaining the requisite data. A preliminary Report on the trade of that country from October, 1903 to February, 1904 was, however, issued in May, 1904. There was no permanent British Consular officer in Tonking until July last. The annual Reports from that district will, no doubt, be furnished in future as soon as the Consul can obtain the statistics. In the case of Servia, the statistics for 1904 were not issued till the end of November last.

Administration of the Aliens Act.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department if he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Expert Committee concerning the administration of the Aliens Act, and the rules made in accordance therewith, showing in red ink or distinctive type the alterations he has made therein, and a statement of the reasons upon which he has acted.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The Report of the Committee in question was a confidential Report to the Secretary of State, and I regret that it would be contrary to principle to accede to the hon. Member's request that it should be laid upon the Table. For the rest, I need only refer to the Papers † which I presented yesterday in accordance with the promise which I made in this House on Wednesday last; and I may point out that, in addition to the Papers I then promised, I have presented the published Memorandum on the working of the Act, which contains the gist of the Committee's Report. As I have only revoked one existing Order and made one new Rule, both of which steps are well known to the House from my statement, there is no need for distinctive type. The reasons upon which I have acted were fully explained in last Wednesday's debate.

Harrowing Pictures at the Palace Theatre.

*MR. DUNCAN SCHWANN (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to pictures of coursing for the Waterloo Cup, depicting the death agonies of a hare, which appear on the biograph at the Palace Theatre; and whether he proposes to take any steps to stop the continuance of this spectacle.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiry into this matter, and I understand that the part of the picture to which objection was taken has now been withdrawn.

Working Men Inspectors of Mines.

MR. CORY (Cornwall, St. Ives): I beg to ask the Secretary of States for the Home Department whether the workmen of a colliery, in appointing two persons being practical working miners but not being two of their number, under General Rule 38 of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, should be required to furnish to the manager of such colliery proof that the two persons so appointed are practical working miners; and, if so, what proof should be given.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I think that in cases where men not working at the colliery are appointed to make an examination under this rule, a manager would be entitled to some proof that they are practical working miners as prescribed by the rule. I do not see why there should be any difficulty in furnishing this proof. The men appointed might, for instance, bring a reference from the manager of the colliery at which they work; or the names of the men and the collieries at which they work might be communicated to the manager beforehand in time to allow him to make inquiry.

MR. T. RICHARDS (Monmouthshire, W.) was understood to ask if the fact that the men were working in a mine would not be sufficient proof that they were practical workmen.

*MR. GLADSTONE asked for notice of the Question.

Coroner's Inquests on Licensed Premises.

MR. A. WILLIAMSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that the provisions of Section 21 of The Licensing Act, 1902, prohibiting the holding of any coroner's inquest on licensed premises where other suitable premises have been provided for such inquest, will come into operation on March 31st, 1907, he will consider the advisability of addressing a communication to the local authorities of England and Wales, drawing their attention to the enactment in question and to the desirability of their, in the interval, making suitable provision, or otherwise securing accommodation, for such courts upon unlicensed premises, before the date named, in accordance with the intention of the Legislature.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I will consider what action I can properly take in the matter and whether I should issue a circular to county and borough authorities but it must be borne in mind that except in the county of London local authorities are not under any statutory obligation to provide places for the holding of inquests.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 196.

Charitable Institutions and the Merchant Shipping Act.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to Section 111 (2) of the Merchant Shipping Act, requiring a licence to be held for the prevention of crimping, and that under such section his Department now require that charitable institutions who train boys for the sea must take out a licence before they can apply to a shipowner to take these boys; and whether, in view of the effect of this requirement upon the committees of management of such institutions as the Metropolitan training ship "Exmouth," the training ship "Mount Edgcumbe," the Birkdale Farnworth Nautical School, Father Berry's Liverpool Training Homes, and the "Clio" and the Macclesfield Industrial School, he will, in proposing Amendments to such Act, be prepared to give facilities for their work to such institutions.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): Yes, Sir. I am aware of the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act with regard to the supply of seamen and boys to which the hon. Member refers. The requirements of the section are in the interests of the boys in the institutions named, and I do not quite understand what is meant by their effect upon the committees of management. I shall, however, be happy to consider any suggestion that may be made to me by which the work of such institution could be facilitated and the interests and safeguards now provided for the seamen and boys left untouched.

Carnarvon and Newry Granite Industry.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the magnitude and importance of the manufacture and trade in granite paving sets, especially on the coasts of Carnarvonshire and the neighbourhood of Newry in Ireland, and the depression in that trade at present existing, owing to the importation of such sets from abroad free from any contribution to the Imperial Revenue or local rates and taxes, he would be prepared to favourably consider a proposal that all such foreign-made sets should pay an import duty at all events equivalent to the Imperial and local burdens which are incident to those manufactured in this country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Answer is in the negative.

Delays on the District Railway.

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any official information or Report upon the subject of breakdowns and delays in the traffic on the District Railway between Ealing and the City; whether such delays are attributable to the fact that the rolling stock is of foreign construction; and whether, if he has not cognizance of the facts, he will direct an inquiry to be held to ascertain the cause of this public inconvenience.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have received a Report from the Metropolitan District Railway Company on the subject of the breakdowns on their line, and the purport of that Report is contained in the reply given to a Question put yesterday by the noble Lord the Member for Maidstone.† Upon the explanation given by the company it would appear that an inquiry of the nature suggested would not serve any useful purpose.

House of Commons Post Office.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the fact that, arising out of the number of new Members in the present House of Commons, and the amount of correspondence requiring to be dealt with by the postal staff at the Members' post office in the House, delays have arisen in such post office, and it has recently become impossible to get the morning letters for Members at such post office before half-past ten o'clock in the morning; and whether he would be prepared to make some arrangements with a view to obviating this inconvenience.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 218.

Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): I beg also to ask the Postmaster-General if, without making any important structural alterations in the post office in the Members' Lobby, he could, at an early date, arrange to give more accommodation at the windows, so as to facilitate the delivery of letters and the transaction of the other business of Members.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The First Commissioner and I have together carefully considered the question of the House of Commons Post Office accommodation. It does not appear to be possible to make any important structural alterations which would improve the accommodation; and in any case, these could not be done while Parliament is sitting. We have, however, arranged to move the post box from its present position, and to place it in the corner of the Lobby. The space thus vacated will be utilised as an additional window of access for Members to the post office. In addition, a considerably larger number of pigeon holes will be erected inside the office, so as to expedite the sorting and delivery of letters to Members. These alterations will be carried out by my right hon. friend during the Easter Recess. Further, it has been arranged that a considerable portion of the sorting of the heavier packets shall be done in the outer office, instead of in the office in the Members' Lobby. Then, in order to relieve the accumulating congestion of letters and packets, which greatly hampers the work of the office, I have authorised the re-addressing of parcels without charge so that each day the post office will be cleared of them. I hope that these and other small changes will facilitate the delivery of letters and the transaction of the business of Members with the post office.

Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, having regard to the fact that deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank may not at present exceed £50 in any one year, or £200 in all, he will consider the desirability of increasing the maximum sum to be deposited to £500, with a view to further encourage safe methods of investment among the artizan classes which shall not be liable to market fluctuations.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question of the Post Office Savings Bank deposits is receiving consideration.

Trust Deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. RENDALL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the desirability of taking means to enable trustees of estates not exceeding in value £1,000 to be permitted to invest trust moneys in the Post Office Savings Bank in their own names as trustees.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I doubt if it would be desirable to extend the present facilities of the Post Office Savings Bank in the direction indicated.

Stratford Inland Revenue Supervisor's Promotion.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury in reference to the recent promotion of a supervisor of Inland Revenue over more than a hundred of his seniors, whether he is aware that when this officer was promoted a few years ago, from a second to a first-class station, a special inquiry was ordered into the unsatisfactory manner in which he had performed his duties in connection with licensing matters; whether this was considered when promoting him over the heads of those who had never been the subject of complaint; and whether, when this officer was stated to have been assigned to Stratford, as being a more advantageous appointment than that to Salisbury, the Board of Inland Revenue had in view the fact that the total duty from all sources in the Salisbury district is fully three times that in Stratford, and that Stratford is one of the least important districts in England.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): No such inquiry was ordered nor was there any complaint of the kind suggested. With regard to the last part of the question I would observe that the amount of revenue collected is by no means the only criterion of the importance of an appointment. In this particular instance the officer was appointed to Stratford at his own request. As none of his seniors desired the post the Board, following their usual practice, complied with his wishes.

Breeding Cattle for the Argentine.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether in consequence of the guarantee demanded by Argentine buyers of breeding cattle that these shall stand the tuberculin test when landed in Argentina, it is the custom for sellers in this country to submit the animals to the test before sending them; and whether those animals that fail to answer the test are used for breeding stock in this country.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: We have no information to show whether the practice referred to by my hon. friend is customary or not. There is nothing in the present state of the law to prevent owners from testing their cattle with tuberculin, and subsequently using them for breeding purposes.

Scottish Education Circulars.

Mr. CROMBIE: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can arrange for copies of the most important of the minutes and circulars of the Education Board being delivered to Scotch Members at the House of Commons.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): All Minutes of the Department are laid on the Table of the House and copies can be obtained in the usual way at the Vote Office. A collection of the more important circulars of the Department up to that date was published in May, 1904. The circulars issued since that date, are few in number and have all been published in the annual Blue-book.

Board of Education for Scotland.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether a Board of Education for Scotland, distinct from the Scotch Education Department, still exists; if not, whether the powers and duties of the said Board have devolved on the said Department; whether, if such devolution has taken place, the office and general place of business of the said Department are in Edinburgh or in London; and if the office and general place of business of the said Department are in London, whether, in view of Sub-Clause 2 (read with the concluding words of Sub-Clause 6) of Clause 3 of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872, he will say what steps he proposes to take.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The Board of Education established for certain temporary purposes by Section 3 of the Act of 1872 has ceased to exist and its powers and duties have devolved upon the Department. The Department which is a department of the Privy Council, has offices both in London and Edinburgh. Sub-section 2 of Section 3 of the Act of 1872 to which the hon. Member refers has been repealed by the Statute Law Revision Act of 1883.

Reductions of Irish Rents.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why, whereas the Land Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners, when fixing rents on yearly tenancies in 1896–7, gave reductions averaging, for the whole of Ireland, more than 27 per cent. on both first and second-term rents, in 1904–5 they gave reductions of only 14·8 on first-term and 15·8 on second-term rents, and they are at present giving smaller reductions or none; and will he enable the public to test the statistics used in arriving at these decisions and method of using them, and especially the method according to which rents appear to be increased by any enhanced value of the holding, due solely to the tenant's labour and money.

*The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): I am informed by the Land Commission that first-term statutory rents fixed by Chief and Sub-Commissions in the year 1896–7 showed an average reduction of 27·6 per cent., and the second-term statutory rents an average reduction of 27 per cent. The corresponding figures for the year 1904–5 were 14·8 and 15·8 per cent., respectively. And for the period of nine months ending December 31st last the figures were 18·9 and 15·8, respectively. I have already pointed out to the hon. Member that Parliament has placed the determination of rents in the hands of the Land Commission. Their decisions in the matter are judicial decisions, and I am not aware that I have any power to inquire into the merits of those decisions. I have repeatedly stated that the Land Commission inform me that it is not the fact that rents are increased upon tenants' improvements.

MR. GINNELL inquired if copies of the rules and instructions to the Commissioners were not yet obtainable by Members of the House?

*MR. BRYCE said he would inquire.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) complained that the tenants did not get the full benefit of the improvements which they themselves made.

Irish Landlords and Poor Rates.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state the gross amount of poor rates of which Irish landlords have been relieved under Section 52 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, year by year, since that Act came into operation; and if there is any monetary deduction, set-off, or other advantage derived by the tenants or by the public from or in consequence of that relief to the landlords, to state its amount, year by year, during the same time.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are unable to afford the information asked for in the first part of the Question. In reply to the latter inquiry, I may refer the hon. Member to Section 48 of the Act quoted, which provides for the annual payment, in relief of rates on agricultural land, of a sum taken on the basis of a standard year, which has been certified to amount to £727,650.

Irish Land Sub-Commissioners.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many lay sub-commissioners are now in the service of the Irish Land Commission; how many of them have had practical experience as rent-paying farmers, depending entirely or mainly upon the profits of that occupation for their living; and, if any, will he state the number of years of such experience previous to appointment as sub-commissioners.

MR. BRYCE: Fifty-six lay assistant commissioners are at present in office. The Land Commissioners inform me that they have no information as to how many of these have had practical experience as rent-paying farmers depending entirely or mainly upon the profits of that occupation for their living. A Return which was presented pursuant to an Order of the House in 1902 (No. 151) sets forth certain particulars in respect of each assistant commissioner then in office, and all those who are now serving are included in that Return. The Return shows, among other particulars, the acreage of land farmed by each assistant commissioner prior to his appointment and whether he held as owner or tenant.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Will the Return show the profits made by the sub-commissioners?

MR. BRYCE: That would be information very difficult to get.

MR. KILBRIDE: They could give it, but they would not care to.

MR. LONSDALE: Has any complaint been made as to the action of these Commissioners?

MR. BRYCE: That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Irish Exports and Imports.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of issuing monthly Reports of Irish exports and imports as are issued by the Board of Trade for the United Kingdom, or similar to figures issued by all self-governed British Colonies.

MR. BRYCE: The monthly Returns referred to, which deal with foreign trade, are collected under statutory powers. No such powers exist in regard to the cross-channel trade, and the Department of Agriculture necessarily depends for its statistics in this respect upon information voluntarily supplied. In these circumstances, it is feared that it would be useless to attempt to issue monthly Returns.

Inquiry into the Irish Fishing Industry.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in reference to the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, whether in view of the admitted necessity for the development of the Irish fishing industry, he will add to the Committee some gentleman of practical knowledge and experience of the capture and curing of deep sea fish.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that Mr. Micks, a member of the Committee, was for some years secretary of the Congested Districts Board, and as such had administrative experience of the Board's fishery operations. Mr. Mick's knowledge, added to that which the Committee will obtain by evidence, will, in my opinion, be sufficient to enable them to deal with any question belonging to that part of the Department's work which may come before them.

Mr. FLYNN: Has any one on the Committee practical acquaintance with the important work of fish curing?

Mr. BRYCE: I do not know, but it would be difficult to have on a limited Committee of that sort persons familiar with every branch of the industry.

Value of Irish Live Stock.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the estimated value of live stock, cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, etc., in Ireland on December 31st, 1905; and whether he will state the total value of live stock exported in the twelve months ending December 31st, 1905.

Mr. BRYCE: The total value of live stock in Ireland on the date mentioned is estimated by the Department of Agriculture at sixty-nine millions sterling, and the total value of live stock exported from Ireland during the year 1905 is estimated at thirteen-and-quarter millions sterling.

Irish Light Railways—Public Charges.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the total amount levied by local boards to provide operating expenses and interest of capital in connection with railways built since 1887, under the Light Railways Acts.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board are not in possession of the information asked for, and could only obtain it by application to the local authorities. I am, moreover, informed that it is doubtful whether the present local authorities could in all cases furnish information of the expenditure prior to 1899, when they came into being.

Value of Irish Imports.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the estimated total value of Irish imports in the year ending December 31st, 1905, under the following heads of food stuffs, raw materials, manufactured or partly manufactured articles respectively, and the estimated increase or decrease compared with 1904.

Mr. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture are not yet in a position to form an estimate of the cross-channel trade for the year 1905, to which it is presumed that the Question refers. The foreign trade Returns are prepared by the Customs authorities, and are annually presented to Parliament.

Mr. O'MARA: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to expedite the getting of this information?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no doubt the Department will get it as early as possible. I will convey the hon. Member's wish to it.

Constable Anderson, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that three men, admittedly innocent, one of whom died, were tried, convicted, and sentenced to lengthened terms of imprisonment by the evidence of Sergeant Sheridan, Royal Irish Constabulary, who, with the aid of three perjured accomplices in the force, of whom one is Constable Anderson, brought home to them crimes of which he and his accomplices were the perpetrators, and received thereby promotion and pecuniary rewards, while a fourth man, also innocent of any crime, pleaded guilty to the charges of Sheridan and his accomplices and was sentenced to a lengthened term of imprisonment; whether he is aware that Sergeant Sheridan was dismissed from the force and allowed to leave the country without trial, while two of his accomplices were allowed to retire from the force, receiving gratuities of some hundreds of pounds sterling, paid to them as compassionate allowances, whilst Constable Anderson has been retained in the force; whether the Irish Government still intend to retain Constable Anderson in the police force in discharge of the duties and receipt of pay; for what reason has this man been retained in the force; why can he not be called on to resign, as in the cases of his two confederates, with a compassionate allowance; and whether, having regard to the circumstances, the Government will take any, and, if so, what, steps to rid the Irish constabulary force of Anderson.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that the facts are substantially as stated in the hon. Member's Question. I fear that I am not in a position to add much to the reply which I gave him on the 7th instant.† As I then stated, this matter was repeatedly debated in this House while the late Government were in office. I find that on July 23rd, 1902, the right hon. Member for Dover stated that he had to choose between two calamities—keeping people in the force who ought not to be there, and breaking an undertaking which had been given by the Government; and, for the reasons he then stated, he decided upon the former course. The three constables who were Sheridan's accomplices were given the opportunity of resigning with the means of starting afresh as honest men. Two out of the three resigned and were given what has been described as compassionate allowances, amounting to £200 and £50, respectively. The third, Anderson, protested his innocence and refused to resign; and he has since been retained at the depot under the circumstances already described. The only question which His Majesty's Government have now to decide is whether they are to observe the undertaking given by the late Government, and my Answer must be in the affirmative. It is to be remembered that Constable Anderson performs no public duty, but is retained on "fatigue" duty at the depot, without any authority over recruits or other members of the force.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is not this man kept as a centre of pollution throughout the whole force? Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that the honour of the Government is bound by a corrupt bargain entered into by its predecessors? May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Duke of Bedford, as Lord-Lieutenant, refused to be bound by a corrupt bargain made by his predecessors with reference to the Act of Union? If the right hon. Gentleman is bound, what is the use of changing one Chief Secretary for another?

[No Answer was returned.]

St. Patrick's Day—Closing of Licensed Premises in Ireland.

Mr. O'MARA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the percentage of licensed premises closed in consequence of pressure of public opinion on St. Patrick's day in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Londonderry, Limerick, Waterford, Galway, and Kilkenny.

* Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Police authorities that the number of licensed premises wholly or partially closed on St Patrick's Day was as follows:—

In Dublin,	284	out of a total of	1242
„ Belfast,	none	„ „	1167
„ Cork,	46	„ „	533
„ Londonderry,	3	„ „	227
„ Limerick,	270	„ „	291
„ Waterford,	93	„ „	218
„ Galway,	133	„ „	134
„ Kilkenny,	94	„ „	112

Kilworth Evicted Tenant.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have received an evicted tenant's form claiming to be reinstated signed by Patrick Myles, junior, to whom his father, Patrick Myles, senior, assigned his farm in 1900, previous to the eviction of the family in March, 1902; whether he is aware that the landlady, Mrs. Caroline Burke, Heclash, Fermoy, is not averse to reinstate Myles in his former holding of seventy acres, situated at Ballingaparka, Kilworth, county Cork; and whether, under the circumstances, the Estates Commissioners will intervene with a view to bring about a satisfactory arrangement.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 458–9.

*MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received from Patrick Myles an application for re-instatement in his former holding on the estate referred to. The Commissioners approached the owner with the object of facilitating the reinstatement of the tenant, but her solicitors stated that she did not wish to part with her interest in the holding in question.

Irish Land Appeals.

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say how many cases were decided by the Court of Land Appeal, under the provisions of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1903, c. 37, s. 88.; in how many cases was inspection of the holding required by the tenant; in how many by the landlord; what was the average increase or reduction made in the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners in such cases respectively; and can he say what was the average increase or reduction made by the Court of Appeal in the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners in the cases in which appeals were heard and decided without such inspection being required by either landlord or tenant.

*MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Land Commission that 10,131 cases under the provisions of the 88th Section of the Irish Land Act, 1903, have been disposed of by the Judicial Commissioners. Inspections of the holdings, usually by the direction of the Court, sometimes at the request of the landlord, and sometimes at that of the tenants, have been made in all such cases, with the exception of not more than twelve cases out of the whole number. It would not be possible, without going through the records of proceedings in all the cases to state in what number of cases the landlord and the tenant, respectively, applied for inspection. The particulars showing the results of rehearings and appeals, and the difference per cent. between rents fixed by the Sub-Commissions and the Civil Bill Courts, and the rents fixed after rehearings and appeals, appear annually in the Appendices to the Reports of the Land Commission. In the report for the year ending 31st March, 1905, these particulars are shown at pages 54 to 67.

Inspectors of Secondary Schools in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the deadlock between the Intermediate Commissioners in Ireland and the Treasury as to the appointment of inspectors of secondary schools in Ireland; and, as this deadlock is injurious to education, whether he will use his influence with the Treasury to allow the views and judgment of the Intermediate Commissioners, who are all Irishmen, to prevail over those of the Treasury officials in this purely Irish question.

*MR. BRYCE: This matter has received, and will continue to receive, my careful attention. It has been decided that a permanent inspectorate shall not be established until the parts which inspection and examination should respectively play in the distribution of State aid to intermediate schools have been determined. I may remind the hon. Member that the recent Commission on Intermediate Education in Ireland expressed the opinion that a permanent inspectorate should not be appointed so long as the existing system upon which grants for intermediate education are administered remains unchanged.

Belleek Outrage.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a Methodist minister, returning from a religious service at Belleek, county Fermanagh, where he was one of the officiating clergy, was attacked outside the village of Garrison by four men with blackened faces, who threw him off his bicycle, which they smashed; whether the clergyman thus assaulted was a prominent worker for the radical candidate for North Fermanagh at the last general election; and whether the men who assaulted him, who were convicted and fined at the Belleek Petty Sessions, were all Orangemen; and what steps will the Government take to protect, from the violence of the members of the Orange lodges, persons of their own religion from whom they disagree on political questions.

MR. BRYCE: The police received information that on the night of 6th February, a number of persons were returning on cars from service in the Methodist Church at Belleek. Mr. Hindmarsh, a Methodist Lay Evangelist, who was riding a bicycle, accompanied the party. When about a mile from Belleek, stones were thrown at the party by four men, whose faces, however, were not blackened. One of the men barred Mr. Hindmarsh's way, and, as a result, Mr. Hindmarsh jumped from his bicycle and fell on the road. The four men then smashed the bicycle, but did no personal injury to Mr. Hindmarsh. The police prosecuted the offenders, one of whom gave evidence against the other three. Two of these were fined £1 each, and the other 5s. for assaulting Mr. Hindmarsh. They had already paid that gentleman the sum of £9 for the damage done to his bicycle and for costs. Mr. Hindmarsh himself informed the police that he was a stranger in the locality and had taken no part in the recent election. His assailants, according to the information of the police, are not Orangemen. I am informed by the inspector-general that the excitement which attended the recent contested election has now abated, and that no special police action appears to be necessary. Whenever protection becomes necessary against violence from any quarter it is the duty of the police to afford it.

Aglish Outrage.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the house of Michael Allen, at Aglish, Killarney, was entered by a band of disguised and armed men, and a gun and other articles taken; and whether the police have made any arrests in connection with this matter.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that a complaint to the effect stated has been made to the local police, but it was not alleged that any article except a gun was taken. The police have fully investigated the matter, but have not so far obtained sufficient evidence to justify them in making any arrests.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that at the last Assize the Judge congratulated the Grand Jury on the peaceable condition of this country?

MR. BRYCE: I believe that is so.

Rehy Rabbit Preserve.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 10th instant a band of upwards of 200 men and boys, with dogs and sticks and spades, entered the farm of John Fitzgerald at Rehy, Carrigaholt, county Clare, which he uses for breeding and feeding rabbits, and, after killing as many rabbits as they could, dug up all the burrows they could find; and what steps, if any, are being taken to deal with actions of this nature.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that Fitzgerald is not the occupier of the farm in question, which forms part of the estate of Major Hickman, now being sold to the tenants. The farm was until recently used by the landlord as a rabbit preserve, but as the sale to the tenants included the sporting rights, the landlord has, I am informed, abandoned the use of this farm as a game preserve. Upon several occasions during the present month about a hundred men and boys have assembled on the farm to kill rabbits without objection from Fitzgerald, who was the former gamekeeper, or, so far as I know, from anyone else. No interference on the part of the police has been called for.

Dromagh Evicted Tenants.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the estate of W.N. Leader, Dromagh, county Cork, and the correspondence which has passed between the Reverend Father Casey, P.P., and the hon. Member for North Cork, on the one hand, and the Estates Commissioners on the other, will the Commissioners now state what steps they have taken to bring about the reinstatement of the evicted tenants, Mr. Job

Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Mary Cronin (to the reinstatement of whom the landlord has given consent); and, in view of this landlord's willingness to sell a large portion of the untenanted land in his possession, and of the fact that the originating notice was lodged by the owner in June, 1905, will the Commissioners take immediate steps to secure this land for the purpose of creating suitable holdings for other evicted tenants, and for the labourers of the locality, and for the enlargement of the present uneconomic holdings on the estate.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 26th February on this subject.† The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not yet been able to make inquiries into the cases of these evicted tenants, but that they hope to be in a position to do so shortly.

Mr. FLYNN: This matter has been going on a long time. Will the Land Commissioners make the inquiries soon?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no doubt they will do so as soon as they can.

Newman Estate, Mallow.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the Newman estate, Mallow, whether he can say under what section of the Land Act of 1903, or by what regulation of the Lord-Lieutenant under the said Act, the Estates Commissioners claim the right or discretion to exclude from the purchase scheme of this estate the tenant, Mr. T. C. O'Callagham, although he offered to purchase upon the same terms as the other tenant purchasers; and, having regard to the fact that this man was an industrious improving farmer, holding under a judicial tenancy, and has now been evicted, will the Commissioners retain in their own hands the corpus of the purchase money and the bonus, or take other steps to reinstate this man and place him in the same position as the other purchasing tenants on the estate.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the holding referred to was excluded from the purchase proceedings in pursuance of the powers given to the Commissioners by Section 98 of the Act of 1903, which provides that the expression "estate" shall mean any lands which the Estates Commissioners may declare fit to be regarded as a separate estate for the purposes of the Act. The Commissioners are now in communication with the vendor on the subject of the eviction of O'Callaghan, and while those communications are in progress they are not in a position to make any statement upon the concluding part of the Question.

Mr. FLYNN: This case is one of very great importance to the district.

Irish Prison Governors.

Mr. MEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what were the grounds on which five ex-military men, some of whom hold pensions from the Crown, have been appointed to the governorship of Irish prisons; what training and experience have these five gentleman, recently appointed over the heads of the prison service, had to qualify them for the positions; and will this system of depriving the staff of the prospect of promotion be persisted in.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the very full reply which I gave to the hon. Member's Question of the 12th instant on this subject.‡ Only one recent appointment of the kind referred to has been made. Prison governors are appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant, whose function it is to satisfy himself that the gentlemen to be appointed possess the necessary qualifications. I have already stated that the proportion of promotions to governorships from subordinate ranks of the prison service is exceptionally large in Ireland, eleven out of the existing eighteen governors having been so promoted. There is no intention of departing from the present system, under which the claims of subordinate ranks to promotion have been fully recognised.

Police Protection in County Limerick.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that there are sixteen persons in county Limerick who are under constant police protection; and whether he can say what are the causes which necessitate police protection in so many cases.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 796.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 903–4.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that there are only two persons under constant police protection in county Limerick, and that each of these persons is the caretaker of an evicted farm. There are, however, fourteen other persons who receive, not constant, but occasional police protection by patrols. The need has usually arisen from agrarian disputes.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Judges of Assize and the County Court Judge have lately pronounced Limerick to be one of the most peaceable districts of Ireland, and that frequently during the last five years they have been presented with white gloves because there have been no prisoners for trial.

Mr. BRYCE: I think that is so.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL asked if the Question was in order, and whether, as framed, it did not make the hon. Member putting it responsible for the facts? Was it right that bogus charges should be put on the Paper in this way?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see anything in the form of the hon. Member's Question to object to.

Queen's County and Canadian Cattle Imports.

Mr. MEEHAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Resolutions were passed by the County Council, Queen's County, the County Committee of Agricultural and Technical Instruction, the Slievemargy and Ossory Agricultural Societies in the same county, protesting against the withdrawal of the prohibition against the importation of Canadian store cattle, on the grounds that it would be ruinous to the interests of small farmers, and almost certain to introduce cattle disease to the country; and will he say whether the prohibition will be withdrawn; and if, so, on what date.

Mr. BRYCE: The Department of Agriculture have received Resolutions to the effect indicated in the Question. The prohibition referred to is imposed by statute.

Agrarian Disturbances in County Galway.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether since 1st June last, in county Galway, there have been four cases of knocking down walls and gates, eight cases of intimidating letters and notices, four cases of agrarian assaults, eighteen cases of intimidation, other than by letters and notices, eleven cases of shooting into houses, two cases of shooting at persons, and one case of malicious injury to animals; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that since the 1st June last there have been in county Galway four cases of malicious injury to walls or gates, in three of which the injury done was trifling; twenty-two cases of intimidation by threatening letters or notices; two cases of assault, which might possibly have arisen from agrarian matters, though this is not certain; one case of intimidation other than by threatening letters or notices; ten cases of firing shots into houses; one case of firing at the person; and one case of malicious injury to animals. In one of the cases of alleged agrarian assault the Grand Jury threw out the bill against the accused, and in the case of firing at the person the accused were acquitted at Assizes. I am informed that county Galway was in an unsatisfactory state last year owing chiefly to an agitation in the early summer against the grazing system, but that the condition of affairs has decidedly improved since then, and that there is every reason to hope that this improvement will continue.

Gilford Township and the Banbridge Union Rates.

Mr. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the ratepayers in the township of Gilford, county Down, for years past, besides having to pay their share of the rates for the union of Banbridge, from which the rural school attendance officer is paid his salary, have had to pay a special addition to the town rates for the purpose of paying a town school attendance officer, and that notwithstanding that the said ratepayers have been paying two different rates to two different men for doing the same work neither of these school attendance officers has done anything in the matter of looking after the attendance of children within the township for over eight months; and whether he will take steps to secure that in future these ratepayers shall be responsible for rates to pay only one officer, whether urban or rural, and that that officer shall attend to his business better than such business has been attended to in the past.

*Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board understand that the facts are substantially as stated in the first part of the Question. The difficulty has arisen owing to an over-lapping of areas under the Irish Education Act, 1892, and a remedy could only be provided by legislation. I am, however, informed that for the past nine months the Gilford Town Commissioners have ceased to employ a school attendance officer, and the difficulty has therefore been obviated for the time being. The question as to the performance of his duties by the school attendance officer of the Banbridge rural district is one for the District Council to deal with.

Annesley and Downshire Estates.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the lay Sub-Commissioner has recently, in several second-term applications by tenants on the estates of Earl Annesley and the Marquess of Downshire, county Down, confirmed the first judicial rents, and has in other cases granted only nominal reductions below the scale voluntarily proposed by the landlords; what reason, if any, the Sub-Commissioner gives for fixing a higher acreable rent on these estates than was assessed by former Sub-Commissions; whether he is aware that in consequence of the Sub-Commissioner's conduct the landlords concerned have withdrawn the scale of voluntary reductions heretofore offered to the tenants on executing second-term judicial agreements; and whether the attention of the Chief Land Commission will be called to this matter.

*Mr. BRYCE: The Land Commission inform me that during the period which has elapsed since the passing of the Act of 1903, eighty-seven second-term rents have been judicially fixed by the Sub-Commission Courts on the estate of the Earl of Annesley. In seven of these cases the second-term rents are the same as the first-term rents, and in eighty the first-term rents have been reduced. The total average reduction in respect of the eighty-seven cases represents 18·2 per cent. During the same period 427 second-term rents were fixed on the estate of the Marquess of Downshire. In one case the second-term rent is the same as that fixed for the first-term. In 426 cases the first-term rents were reduced. The average percentage of the reduction is the same as in the case of the Annesley estate. The Commissioners consider that they ought not to discuss the judicial decision of the Sub-Commission Courts in any particular case, and, moreover, appeals are pending in some of the cases referred to. Agreements fixing fair rents entered into in accordance with the provisions of Section 8, Sub-section 6, of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, during the period mentioned, have been received by the Land Commission in respect of the estates in question, namely, 410 from the Annesley estate, and 1,976 from the Downshire estate. The reduction as between the first and second-term rents represents 14·1 and 15·5 per cent. respectively.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is it the case that landlords are withdrawing the scales of voluntary reductions heretofore offered to the tenants? On what basis do the Sub-Commission fix the rents higher than the landlords are willing to agree to?

*Mr. BRYCE: I cannot go into the question of the reasons actuating the Commission.

Seed Potato Loans.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what amount has been lent by the Board of Works to boards of guardians in Ireland, since December, 1904, for the purpose of providing seed potatoes; and how many Poor Law guardians have availed themselves of this provision to obtain seed intended for the relief of distress from the Poor Law

Boards of which they were members, and so became disqualified from acting as guardians and liable to penalties for so doing.

Mr. BRYCE: Loans amounting to £70,017 13s. 2d. have been made since December, 1904, to boards of guardians for the purchase of seed potatoes. A table giving particulars of these loans will be found at pages 376–7 of the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for 1904–5. The board are unable to state how many guardians availed themselves of the means of obtaining a supply of imported seed, but as all persons rated under £15 were eligible, it is believed that a considerable number of guardians did so. The primary object of the seed supply operations was, not to relieve distress, but, there having been a partial failure of the potato crop, to introduce new varieties of seed and thereby to improve the crop.

Mr. LONSDALE: Are not the guardians who thus acted disqualified?

Mr. BRYCE: According to a recent decision they are, but it was not known at the time.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Has any action been taken in the matter?

Mr. BRYCE: It is hardly a topic which can be dealt with by Question and Answer. If the Question is raised on the Estimates, I will give fuller information.

Royal University and Disloyal Demonstration by Students.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House copies of the Minutes of Proceedings in the Senate of the Royal University relating to the exhibition of disloyalty by students at the last conferment of degrees, and the powers of the Senate for dealing with such matters, together with the correspondence which has passed between the Irish Government and the Senate upon this subject since October last.

Mr. BRYCE: I have referred this Question to the Secretaries of the Royal University in order to ascertain whether there would be any objection on the part of the Senate to the publication of the minutes of proceedings referred to, and I am informed that the matter will be laid before the Senate for consideration at its next meeting in May. In the meantime it will be premature to consider the question of publishing the correspondence referred to in the latter part of the Question.

The University Question.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of resolutions passed by the Royal University Graduates' Association, protesting against any settlement of the university question involving the expenditure of State money upon ecclesiastical or sectarian institutions; and whether, in formulating proposals on this subject, regard will be had to this principle.

Mr. BRYCE: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. I am not at present prepared to make any statement on the subject.

Countess of Kingston's Mitchelstown Estate.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have considered the memorial presented to them in 1904 from persons holding property as tenants in Mitchelstown regarding inclusion of the town in the sale of the agricultural portions of the estate of the Countess of Kingston; and if this matter will receive the attention of the Commissioners when the estate is being inspected during the present month.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have received the memorial in question. The town of Mitchelstown is not included in the estate proposed to be sold. The memorial will be referred to the inspector for enquiry and report when he visits the estate.

Gough Estate, Gort.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any representation has been made to the Estates Commissioners by Lord Gough, in respect to the sale to the occupying tenants of their holdings on the Gough estate in and near Gort; and, if not, in view of the proceedings instituted from time to time against the tenants, leading to disorder, seizures, and disturbance, he will consider with the Estates Commissioners the propriety of communicating with Viscount Gough, with a view to arranging terms of purchase.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings in regard to the sale of Lord Gough's Estate have come before them. The Commissioners will consider whether the circumstances of the case justify their taking any action in the matter under the recent regulations.

Athy Postal Accommodation.

MR. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that dissatisfaction prevails in Athy, county Kildare, with the inadequate accommodation provided both for the public and staff in the present post office premises; can he say what length of time has elapsed since the post office authorities advertised for a site on which to erect a suitable structure; how many replies have been received, and when, offering suitable sites; whether he is aware that inconvenience has arisen owing to the delay in making choice of a site; and can he say when a decision will be arrived at.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The unsuitability of the post office accommodation in Athy is recognised, and advertisements for a site for a new office were issued about two years ago. No offers were received at the time, but three have since been received, and are under consideration. I hope it will be possible to come to a decision in the matter very shortly.

Devolution in Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Leader of the House whether the official correspondence between the late Prime Minister and the late Viceroy of Ireland on the question of devolution is in possession of the present Government, and whether it will be produced.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I cannot answer that Question without inquiry and investigation. I imagine it would not be left in the archives, but I do not know. If the hon. Gentleman will give notice I will inquire.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he would give notice.

Allotted Days of Supply.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) asked if Report of a Naval Supplementary Vote having been taken on Monday that day could be counted as an allotted day in Supply.

*MR. SPEAKER said a Vote for £100 as a Supplementary Navy Estimate was taken on Report. The Standing Order with regard to Supply contained the words—"provided it is occupied with the consideration of the question shall not be included in the computation of the twenty days aforesaid." Properly speaking, the Vote ought not to have been taken, but his attention was not directed to it at the time or it probably would not have been taken. It could hardly be said, however, that the House was occupied by consideration of such an Estimate, for it only took a couple of minutes, and as the matter was a very small one and no substantial injustice had been done he saw no reason why Monday should not be counted as an allotted day.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday, May 4th, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

First Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILL.

ALIENS BILL.

"To amend The Aliens Act, 1905, presented by Mr. O'Grady; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 115.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I propose to move as an Amendment to leave out the words after "that," and insert—"this House declines to proceed with the Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill without an assurance from His Majesty's Government that they will recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire and report on the economic and moral effect of the system of indentured labour at present in operation in the Transvaal." I do not suppose, as at present advised, that it will be necessary to carry that Amendment to a division; but the object of moving it is the convenience of the House in order that the subject under discussion may be clearly defined and not interrupted by other subjects which would be relevant to the Second Reading of the Bill. I do not propose this afternoon to refer again to the old question of our grievance in regard to the misrepresentations which were made on the subject during the general election. The Government have by the mouths of its members acknowledged and regretted the misrepresentations, but have nevertheless largely profited by them. On the other hand, we have suffered, and may perhaps justly feel that it is no use crying over spilt milk. But I think there will be among Members on both sides of the House a feeling that the present situation of this most important question deserves further attention on the part of the House. We have heard varying—I might almost say inconsistent — expressions of opinion from members of His Majesty's Government, and I cannot help thinking that these declarations must have opened the eyes of many members of the Government to the very serious character of the proposals which they have under consideration. They have discovered in the course of discussions on this subject, in the first place, that the prosperity of the whole of South Africa is concerned, and any action they may take may bring bring about most grievous disaster, and we find also, incidentally at any rate, a great constitutional question of our relations with self-governing colonies brought before the House. The general question of the desirability or otherwise of Chinese labour may be discussed under two heads—there is the economic question and there is the moral question. I do not pretend to decide the relative importance of these two heads, but I deal first with the economic question. I may say that my case, to put it briefly, is that on either of these important branches the House, the country, and the Government have not sufficient information. Now as regards the economic question, it is admitted, it has formed the staple of one the speeches of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, that the cessation of the system now in operation, and, indeed, as I understand, the cessation at any time, without any alternative being provided, would be productive of most serious consequences. It is admitted that the gold mines are, and must remain, probably for many years, the principal industry of the Transvaal, and as the principal industry of the Transvaal they are the pivot upon which the whole of the prosperity of South Africa depends. I do not think I need emphasise that. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies—and if I may venture to say, though I differ from many parts of it—in a remarkably statesmanlike speech on the subject, declared that it was generally agreed that the success of the gold mines was indissolubly connected with the prosperity of South Africa; and I venture to say, and I hope to show, that a great deal more than this prosperity depends on the condition. If the mines are closed, if the richest mines are closed, which we are told is likely to be the case, in the first place many thousands of British workmen will be thrown out of employment, and sent home to increase the number of unemployed, already great, that exists here. But that is not all. If the miners go, British influence goes with them. Now, whatever we may think of the nature of the future Constitution to be granted to the Transvaal, we shall all agree with that great principle laid down by Lord Durham in his celebrated letter, that the foundations of a British self-governing Colony must be laid in British influence—that is to say, that, generally speaking, the country must be governed according to British ideas and not according to the ideas of a foreign nation. The House will see that, if we take from the Transvaal a very large proportion of those who are animated by these British ideas, who are nevertheless not tied to the soil, but may come away if their industry suffers or is lacking in development—that if you allow this to happen you will remove from the Transvaal a large proportion of those on whom we must depend in the future to maintain the British flag, British influence, and British ideas. Again, imports, not to the Transvaal alone, but to South Africa, at the present time are British imports, and, of course, exports from Great Britain supply the needs of the Transvaal and South Africa and give employment to a large number of British subjects at home. Destroy the position and the success of the mines and you destroy the prosperity of one of our best customers and influence unfavourably the condition of the working classes in this country. The exports from the Transvaal are principally, of course, gold and some diamonds, but as regards gold I think all persons acquainted with the subject will tell you that if anything occurs to stop the export it must have a serious effect on the finances of this country, and probably on the finances of the whole world. It is not a question—at least, it is not a question I am taking into consideration—of the profits of mine-owners or even of shareholders. I am taking into account the general economic effect of such a change as may follow the cessation of Chinese indentured labour. I think the reduction in the production of the circulating medium that will result from the abandonment of a great number of mines would be of the most serious consequence to the trade of the Empire. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is sanguine as to the results of his coming Budget; but I think he would have little upon which to congratulate himself if there were any serious reduction of these exports. Now, up to the present I do not think I have said anything with which the Government, at all events, will disagree. ["Oh! Oh!"] Well, let the Government speak for themselves. I have not said more, I am confident, than the Government have in substance already said. In the first speech made by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies he brought before the House very much the same arguments as those I have restated in giving reasons why there should be no premature action on the part of the Government, and the position they have defended is that we should look, not merely at the continuance of the present system; that we should allow contracts to be completed which have been entered into with some 16,000 or 20,000 Chinamen for labour in South Africa; that we should in effect give a period variously estimated, but four years at least, and, as we think, an even longer time, during which there would be a gradual abolition, but that no sudden, no violent action for discontinuance should be taken during that period. Now, I submit to the Government that an arrangement of this kind, which is a compromise, is, like a great many compromises, thoroughly unsatisfactory, whatever view is taken. It is unsatisfactory, absolutely unsatisfactory, to the industry concerned. If it should be shown—I do not prejudge the question—if no alternative is offered, that Chinese labour is necessary for the working of the mines to their fullest extent, then what advantage do you confer on the promoters of this industry by holding over their heads this sword of Damocles for four or six years? Is that the way a great industry, the chief industry of a country, can be maintained and developed? I appeal without distinction of party, is there a business man in the House—[Laughter.] The sense of humour in this House is something I have never seen before, and I confess I never knew a great Party so easily amused upon such small occasion. I appeal to men of business and ask them whether they can conceive that any industry can be successfully conducted and properly developed over which there hangs the threat of early extinction? I take an illustration known to all the House—that of sugar refining in this country and the manufacture of sugar refining machinery. Whatever you may think of the Sugar Convention, you must admit that sugar refining in this country and the manufacture of sugar refining machinery were practically destroyed by the uncertainty which prevailed. It was not so much the actual bounty which was given at any time, although that was very serious as a preference, but much more than that was the constant fear that that bounty might be altered to the disadvantage of the trade, and no man in his senses would employ his capital in an industry which was subject to anything of that sort. As it was in the sugar refining industry, so it must necessarily be in the mining industry. It is all very well to suggest, as some have suggested, that the mineowners have stopped their orders for machinery in this country in order to mark their indignation at the conduct of the Government or the House. The mineowners, like other business people, look first to their own interests and their own property, without regard to politics or anything of that sort. It follows that if they have stopped their orders for machinery, or are going to stop their orders, it will not be in order to spite the Government, but it will be because the conditions make it impossible to continue. I urge, and this is one of my claims on the common sense of the House, that, whatever is done in this matter, it should be done quickly, that the policy of the Government should be known to all the world, so that, at all events, those who are immediately and profoundly concerned may be informed upon it and may not remain in any uncertainty, for uncertainty is the very worst thing for trade. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] I again congratulate myself that I may carry with me the majority of the House. I think the Government feel that the fear of action which is to be taken four, six, eight, or ten years hence hanging over this industry is a very undesirable thing; and, therefore, while they are in favour of an abolition of the existing system, they are good enough to provide it with their idea of a substitute, and they tell us that this disaster, which we say would result from the absence of Chinese labour if there is no other labour to be found, need not be feared, because they know there are substitutes which really, if they only were aware of their own interests, must be more advantageous to the mineowners than the present system. What are those alternatives which have been suggested by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies? In the first place, he takes the view that cheap white labour might be substituted for the yet cheaper Chinese and native labour.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I never said cheap white labour.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Really that interruption has no force. At any rate, the Under-Secretary knows enough of this matter to know that a higher-priced white labour is, in any circumstances, absolutely impossible. You may have higher-priced white labour for supervision, for the highest class of skilled labour, but nobody has suggested yet that the ordinary unskilled labour, the labour that is now performed by the Chinaman or the native, could be economically possible unless the white labour was to accept, not the same wages—I do not suggest that—but much more moderate wages.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): Unless the dividends are reduced.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is not a question of dividend. In the case of certain mines, the higher priced, the more valuable, the richer mines, there is no doubt that they might at the price of a reduction of the dividend, which already, remember, is included in the price in the market, so that any reduction now would be a great injustice to the present holders, whatever it might be to the original holders. But I grant the hon. Member that, if the House thought it fit to encourage and support a doctrine of that kind, there are certain mines which could well afford to pay a much larger wage by a reduction of dividend. That applies, however, to a very small proportion of the industry. The great proportion of the industry will be at all times a very poorly paying industry. No one can go into the lower grade mines with any expectation whatever that he is going to make his fortune—at all events as a pure investment. I am not talking of transactions on the Stock Exchange, to which are due almost entirely all the large fortunes of which we hear so much, but, treating it as an ordinary, normal industry, it is perfectly clear you can no more expect to make very large dividends or very large fortunes out of the lower grade mines than you can out of any large competing industry. Therefore, by adopting a policy which would lead to that result, I do not say you would close all the mines, but you would prevent development in the only way in which the trade can be developed in these low grade mines. The House knows that personally I am most favourable to the idea, nothing would please me more than to believe, that white labour at moderate wages could be employed in the place of these Asiatics or of the natives. But I am bound to remember this, that, when you come to discuss the matter with anybody who really knows practically anything about the business, you will find on one side Mr. Creswell, for whom, as I have already said, I have great respect, and, as far as I know, you will not find on the same side any single engineer of eminence. The engineering of the whole of Europe is represented on the Rand. There are, I believe, most distinguished German and French engineers. I know there are some of the finest engineers from the United States of America occupying the highest positions on the Rand, and, of course there are a proportionate number of British engineers, and I say that, as far as I know, there is not a single one of them who agrees with Mr. Creswell. I am not an engineer, and I am not competent to decide between them, although the Under-Secretary is; but, at least, it must be admitted that at present the balance of evidence is against the feasibility of employing white labour of the kind I am now speaking of upon these mines. The other day, the Under-Secretary, as an illustration of the position in which we are, spoke of the Ivanhoe mine in Western Australia, where the work is done entirely by white labour, and where the mine is very successfully managed. But, within the next day or so, the chairman of this mine wrote to say that, although that is true, he does not agree with the Under-Secretary. He does not think the conditions in the Transvaal are at all the same, and does not pretend to believe that the policy of the Ivanhoe mine could be safely pursued in the Transvaal. Surely under these circumstances, unless we think ourselves so wise that we can decide matters of engineering, matters of policy, matters of finance, matters of the most technical character, on our own sole wisdom, we ought to appeal to those who are recognised as scientific experts and witnesses upon the subject, and we should not enter upon what, after all, is a great experiment upon the unproved assertion of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. The Under-Secretary went on to say that, in his opinion, sufficient effort had not been made by the mineowners to secure native labour. Are not the mineowners likely to know their own business as well as, or better than, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies? There native labour is cheaper. It is not open to the enormous objections which we all feel to Chinese labour. Do you suppose—I put that as an *a priori* argument—that they would not have employed native labour if they could have had it? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Yes."] There are so many Gentlemen in the present House who know everything. I do not agree. My argument is that if it was better for the mineowners and the industry to have native labour, and if native labour were procurable they might be trusted to have got it. They say that it is not procurable in sufficient quantities, and upon that I have a strong opinion, and I believe that they are right. Where is the native labour to come from? Long ago native labour in our British possessions was exhausted. While I was at the Colonial Office we did our very best, looking forward to the possibility that some demand for extraneous foreign Asiatic labour might be called for to promote the immigration and the importation of native labour. We tried to get it from Nyassaland, and, owing to a famine that caused terrible distress, the Foreign Office gave their assent, and I believe that the mineowners secured 2,000 or 3,000 labourers from that Colony. But there were the strongest protests made from the whites and from our own fellow-subjects in that Colony, who said that they were not prepared to denude the Colony of labour which would ultimately be required for its own development. Another illustration is Rhodesia, where they refused to allow, or to encourage at all events, the emigration of Rhodesian labour in order to supply the mines. In the Portuguese Colony, from which a great part of the native labour comes, they have already refused to grant permission in some parts of their territory, and I am certain that if the Portuguese become more energetic in regard to their Colonial enterprises or allow other nations to become more energetic, and to take a larger part in the industrial development of their own Colony they will, before many years, find that they cannot spare any of their labour for the British mines. Therefore, I am quite convinced that at the present time there is not enough labour, and that in the near future there will be less native labour. It is entirely a mistake to put before this House as a sufficient reason for getting rid of the Chinese that the mineowners have not taken proper steps to secure native labour.

MR. BYLES: Is it not a question of wages?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am much obliged for the interruption of the hon. Member, because it gives me an opportunity of dealing with that point, although it will prolong my speech. It has been said that wages are too low to attract the natives, and that if the mineowners could be persuaded to pay higher wages they would get all the native labour they want. That is exactly the reverse of practical experience on the Rand. The mineowners at present pay the natives a sum altogether beyond any normal expectation of remuneration which the natives had for their labour. It is probably double what the Boers used to pay for agricultural labourers, and the Boers complained most bitterly that the mineowners outbid them and that agriculture was at a standstill because the mineowners got the labour at a price which the Boer farmers could not afford to pay. The House must remember that human nature is not exactly the same in every quarter of the globe, and that when you come to deal with the human nature of natives in places such as we are considering, you find an altogether different order of ideas to deal with. To begin with, a native does not like work. At any rate, the native has not that real love of work which does exist amongst a great number of working men and others in different positions which makes them miserable if they are idle. That is not the case with the native. The native's idea, when he has got money, is to enjoy it. In fact, he would make a most excellent leisured class if you only provided him with the funds. Let me ask if the Under-Secretary for the Colonies has considered this question? We know how strong he is on the subject of morality. I wonder whether he has considered the state of things partly created by our employment of these natives, and does he consider it repugnant to morality? The native's idea of luxury is a wife—not one wife, but a number of wives, according to his means. Now these wives are not only wives, they are something more. But, after all, we tolerate polygamy in a great number of our dependencies, and I do not know why we should complain of it so much in the case of these native districts. But the wives exist in a state of semi-slavery. The more wives a native has, the more people he has to labour for him, and to allow him to enjoy his leisured existence. That is the condition of leisured existence. You cannot have it unless you have people to work for you. [Cheers.] I suppose that hon. Members who cheer do not altogether approve of that as a desirable state of things or a proper condition of social order. At all events, we are dealing with facts as they are. These natives, whatever you may think of them, are born in the belief that it is their right to be idle and to make their wives work for them. The more wages you give them, the more semi-slaves they will obtain. Incidentally, I said just now that the Boers complain of the high wages we pay the natives. I have talked to a good number of Boer farmers, and I do not think there was one who did not make a complaint because they did not get labourers. If you are to make, and I hope some day or other we shall make, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony more important agricultural countries than they are at present, it can only be done if a sufficiency of labour can be provided; and I do not suppose that anybody suggests that whites should be employed as ordinary agricultural labourers on Boer farms. I do not think the Boers would accept them; they desire to have free access to a large supply of native labour, and if you are going to outbid them and take every native labourer into the mines, it will be a very serious matter. That has to be taken into account in connection with the introduction of foreign labour, which, at all events, relieves to a certain extent the pressure upon native labour. If that were not enough, in the same speech to which I have referred the Under-Secretary for the Colonies suggested that all these threats to a great industry would indirectly operate as a healthy stimulus to the mineowners to seek other alternatives, such as the introduction of labour-saving machinery. I think it is conceivable that labour-saving machinery might be introduced to a greater extent than at present. I am sure the mine-owners are quite alive to their own interests, and they would be only too glad to substitute labour-saving machinery for both native and white labour. But up to the present I believe no satisfactory machinery has been invented that will take the place of the natives and others who are employed in getting out the stuff in which the gold is found. In these circumstances I ask the House to come to the conclusion that we are asked to adopt a policy which must be taken to be a great experiment. If that experiment fails the injury we shall do to South Africa will be enormous, and we do not know enough of our own knowledge at the present time to say whether that experiment can succeed or will fail. The suggestions made to us by the Under-Secretary and other people are all hypotheses, and it is not safe to risk the security and prosperity of a great Colony —it is not fair to them, and it is not right in the interests of the Empire, to do this unless we have absolute knowledge. I claim from the Government, on no Party grounds, but on grounds of common-sense and reason, that they should agree to the suggestion which I made at the beginning of the session, that they should send out an expert Commission in which all the world, and British people especially, will have confidence in order to ascertain what are the true facts about these disputed matters. So much for the economic question.

Now about the moral question. Are the Government themselves agreed about this moral question? We have one Minister saying that this system is slavery, naked and unabashed; another Minister says it is semi-slavery; and another Minister says it has the taint of slavery. The last Minister, to whose opinion the greatest importance should be attached, because he is responsible for the situation in South Africa, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, says he declines all responsibility for these general statements, and deeply regrets that they have ever been made. After all, many hon. Gentlemen opposite feel very strongly upon this subject. Have they made up their minds? May I appeal to them to ask themselves upon what sufficient grounds they have made up their minds, upon what actually acquired knowledge they have come to this decision that it is slavery, naked and unabashed, or semi-slavery, or has the taint of slavery? I ask them, before they rush upon a proceeding which may involve this country in serious consequences, that they will convince themselves that for the opinions they have formed they have already sufficient knowledge, and that they will bear in mind that those whom they follow and support have not made up their minds, because it is perfectly clear from their utterances that they have arrived at different conclusions. Is it unreasonable of me to ask the Government to settle the question once for all? Why cannot they settle their own minds first? South Africa is not so very far away; the people speak the same language and have the same ideal. Why cannot we have evidence taken on the spot by people competent to judge the evidence, who would bring home to us the result of their inquiry, instead of depending upon those instinctive feelings of perfectly honourable but, I would say, perfectly ignorant people? What is the objection? It is not going to delay any important action by a single day. How long will the Commission take? Three months. Say six. Well, you are not going to deal with the thing for six or ten years. How will the Chinamen be benefited, how will morality be benefited by your acting in a sort of paroxysm of morality? Surely your action will be all the more effective, will be justified by the opinion of the civilised world, which is something, if you proceed on actual knowledge. It never will be justified if you act under the suspicion—I will not say that the suspicion is justified—that you are acting in order to cover up your tracks or to find an excuse for the statements you have made before the evidence was produced. We were horrified, and I think every humane man must have been horrified, by the statements which have been made continuously down to the present time of outrages by British subjects abroad upon the Chinese imported into the Transvaal. Well, are you not going to have any inquiry into that? I want to know whether these statements of outrages are true.

Mr. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Lord Selborne say yes.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, Lord Selborne admits certain abuses. There may have been abuses at the commencement of a new system, as there very often are; but Lord Selborne says that they are not continued. But if serious abuses have been alleged ought not we to satisfy ourselves by a more direct inquiry—an inquiry by a Commission would be more impartial than by any one holding the position of High Commissioner—ought not we to have some inquiry to assure us that these outrages ever did exist? Again, what harm can be done? Why are we to leave our fellow-subjects under the general imputation—because, remember, it is not an imputation that here and there some scoundrel or another has misused his temporary powers. I suppose we believe in parental responsibility and affection, and yet we know that the most horrible outrages on children are perpetrated by their own parents in Great Britain. Are we going therefore to condemn the whole civilisation and morality of Great Britain and place a stigma on its name because these outrages take place which everybody condemns? But cannot you place yourselves for one moment in the position of your British fellow-subjects abroad? Do you think that they do not feel these accusations when they are made in this general way, when there is no discrimination? Do you not think that they feel deeply your inability or unwillingness to discriminate between the wickedness of one or two and a general condemnation of the humanity almost of a nation, a nation of the same blood as ourselves? Now, I say again, why am I to be treated almost with contempt by the Prime Minister [cries of "Oh"]—why is it not reasonable to ask, if these outrages have been committed, that they shall be brought home to their authors and that those who have committed them shall, if it be humanly possible, be punished? And, on the other hand, that the nation at large shall, if possible, be relieved from a stigma that is perfectly discreditable? I have tried to think what can be the reason for the refusal of what seems to me to be such a reasonable request. I ask the Prime Minister, will he consider the matter? How are the Government going to suffer if they appoint this Commission, which I hope would be so constituted as to secure universal confidence? Let us take two hypotheses. They will report in one of two ways. If they report that there has been a mistake, that there is no outrage, and that there is absolutely no abuse in connection with the system, then are the Government afraid of the truth? They cannot be afraid of the truth, and if I might submit to their political sense this additional argument I would say, think of what a burden it would relieve them. If the country were convinced upon this impartial authority that they had been misled as to the existence of serious abuses in the Transvaal, then the Government would no longer be committed to a threatened diplomatic intervention in China, or to vetoing a self-governing Colony or to any other of the proceedings to which they apparently have committed themselves. They would then be justified in saying to the House and the country: "This is only an economic question; the question of morality is no longer concerned. We have an economic question to deal with, and that question we are going to leave to the absolutely unfettered discretion of the self-governing Colony we are creating." That is one alternative. I will take the other. Suppose they confirm all the worst anticipations of the gentlemen who, without hearing the evidence, have come to a conclusion; suppose that, after hearing the evidence, their instinct, their extraordinary keen perception of the wickedness of everybody else but themselves is justified, and it appears that what has been going on is really repugnant to humanity, see how strong the Government will be. Who is there, then, who will deny their right to interfere in those circumstances? They will have all the justification anybody can expect them to obtain. They can take strong steps. They can also have the advantage of the advice of the Commission they appoint, because they may instruct the Commission to report, if they find the state of things there unsatisfactory, their recommendations as to what steps should be taken for reform. It appears to me that from a political standpoint alone there is a very strong argument in favour of adopting this course. But look at the present situation. The Government are all at sea. They do not know in the first place what is the condition of things, and they do not know how they are going to relieve the possible conditions of things. They have shown that in their speeches. Read the speech of the Colonial Secretary in the House of Lords. Read the last speech of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. Can anyone say that those two speeches are consistent, or even that the Under-Secretary is consistent with himself? Does anyone pretend that his last speech is consistent with his first speech? I take the last utterance of the Under-Secretary, and I ask the House to consider what is the position in which we are placed by our Government in face of a condition of things which they profess to believe is repugnant to morality and a stain on the honour of the British name. This is what they propose, unless I am misrepresenting them, which I will certainly not do if I can avoid it. They propose to postpone any drastic dealing with this subject for the present. They propose to leave it to a new Government to be established in the Transvaal which may not meet for a year or more. Now their first expectation and hope will be that when this Government meets it will be so animated by their own principles of morality that it will take exactly the same view as they do, and thereupon immediately get rid of the unclean thing. But that is a hope, an expectation; it is not a fact. The Under-Secretary himself showed in his last speech that they did not think it was probable. What will be the real opinion of the Transvaal? Though I do not generally predict, I venture to predict that they will not accept the views of the Government. They will not put a stop to Asiatic immigration, although they may alter in some details the Ordinances. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] Yes, but you can do that. You have already done it. You say that you have removed from the Ordinances the principal objections. Very well. I doubt very much whether any alteration made by the Transvaal Government will remove any objection held by the hon. Gentlemen who interrupt, but it may remove the objection to the economic working of the Ordinance. But I doubt whether it will be in the direction of sentimental or humanitarian views. [Cries of "Oh," and "What about the humanity of the Transvaal?"] Pretty defenders of the humanity of the Transvaal on the other side of the House. But as they have put a wrong meaning to what I have just said I will add this. My own conviction is that the members of the new Transvaal Government will think that the precautions already taken for the humane treatment of the Chinese immigrants are sufficient, and therefore such alterations as they may desire to make will be in regard to other matters in the Ordinance. I rest on statements made by the Under-Secretary. He does not think it probable. He has seen something of the Colonial Office, and he knows much more than hon. Members below the gangway. He thinks it very probable that they will not take the extreme view taken by the majority. Then what will he do? He will interfere in China and forbid British Consuls to carry out their part under the Convention. I wonder whether the law officers of the Crown have been consulted. I am not a lawyer, but it seems to me that the Convention of 1894 is an essential part of the Treaty of 1860, and that without the consent of both contracting parties no part of the Convention or of the Treaty can be abrogated or altered at our discretion. Has the hon. Gentleman satisfied himself by communicating with the Chinese Government that they would be glad to abrogate the Treaty of 1860? If he has assured himself of that assent, then I should ask him to produce the Papers in reference to this matter. It does seem to me that the proposal is illegal and a breach of treaty obligation. But, if this course were possible, the intervention of the Consuls is wholly to the advantage of the Chinese immigrants, and it is they who would suffer if the intervention of the Consuls were withdrawn. Even the Government feel that that is weak, but they say, "We have our great reserve. We will veto any legislation of a self-governing Colony which conflicts with our ideas of morality." That is the most serious thing that has yet been opened up in these debates. I see already that hon. Gentlemen are taking warning by the storm of indignation aroused in the Transvaal. It is brewing in the rest of South Africa, and unless the Colonies are very different from what I have found them it will spread to the other self-governing Colonies. They will never tolerate it. Who is that rush in where angels fear to tread? Hon. Gentlemen speak lightly of this; but remember that in the interpretation of your relations with the Colonies depends the continuance of your Empire beyond all question. It is funny to Gentlemen on the back benches on the Ministerial side, but it is a serious thing for everyone else who cares at all for the future of his country and the Empire. This statement by the Under-Secretary is treated by the Colonies as a menace to their liberties. What is it? It is the suggestion of a totally new form of government unknown to the Constitution. We know the Crown colony form of government. We know the different forms of Constitution which have been evolved out of the Crown colony. We know representative government and responsible government. But we have never known in recent years the extension of the right of veto which has been demanded by the Under-Secretary, which is to extend not to what have been understood as Imperial interests, but to questions of morality—questions not of any absolute ascertained principles of morality, but the morality which may be professed by a particular Party in a particular country at a particular time. I will quote your own great authority against you. The Lord Chancellor the other day was criticising the Lyttelton Constitution. He said that that—

> "Apparently was an attempt to make this country act as a kind of Providence to the people of the Transvaal instead of letting them govern themselves."

But what is this new Government doing? We are to be a Providence to the Transvaal for the purpose of looking after its morality, forsooth! It is impossible. Have Gentlemen opposite, I wonder, read a report of a letter by Sir Willem Van Hulsteyn, one of the most distinguished Afrikander lawyers in the Transvaal? He is a man who is entitled to have an opinion on a great constitutional question. He points out that Chinese labour does not fall into either of the two categories for which the Imperial veto is reserved by tradition—namely, questions affecting the rights of other British subjects or the relations of the Empire with foreign Powers. He shows the danger to the other self-governing Colonies of the precedent apparently contemplated by His Majesty's Government. He says—

> "If to-day they arrogate the right of rejecting by direct or indirect means our legislation on the subject of indentured labour, they may with equal justice claim the right to-morrow to reject any legislation in the self-governing Colonies which does not suit their notions of right and wrong. Nor would the precedent be less dangerous if it were assumed that a special standard of constitutional usage is to be set up for the particular benefit of the Transvaal. If we are not fit for self-government, then do not give it us. But the home Government have declared officially that we are fit for immediate self-government and that they intend to confer it. Yet at the same time they avow their intention of interference with our purely domestic concerns after self-government has been granted. I ask, What, then, is the *status* of a self-governing colony?"

If after full inquiry—for I will not contemplate any action which is not based on full inquiry—you have evidence that satisfies the House and the country that evil practices are going on in the Transvaal, and that it is your business to prevent them, then do not give them self-government until you are certain that these practices will not continue. If you are going to stop it, remember the position. At present the whole question is in your hands. You have Crown colony government of a very limited kind in the Transvaal. It would be very unwise now to interfere with them in a matter of this sort, one of purely domestic concern. But if you think otherwise, deal with the question now while you can, when no constitutional impediment can be raised against you. If to-morrow you say, "Chinese labour must cease," on constitutional grounds no complaint can be made against you. But it is a different thing to postpone your decision until you have created a self-governing colony with a limited liability whose morality you are going to supervise. What is our experience with our Crown colonies and with the greatest of all our dependencies, India? We interfere with India every day on economic questions.

I do not think the Secretary of State will contradict me when I say that if we gave self-government to India to-morrow, one of the first things they would do would be to impose a protective tariff. You do this in the case of Crown colonies. But I do not think the Secretary of State would like to introduce a Bill into this House to institute an inquiry as to whether certain practices in India are entirely consistent with our ideas of morality. Occasionally in the Crown colonies there is more or less evidence of practices, not uncommon in savage tribes and even in civilized countries whose ideas of morality differ from ours, which would not commend themselves to the morality of which we have heard so much. But even in a Crown colony or a dependency the less you say the better. Unless you are willing to incur the greatest danger, you will not inquire too closely whether the ideas of morality in this country—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh"]—I challenge you to inquire as to whether the ideas of morality which prevail in this country are exactly the same as the ideas which prevail in many British possessions. It is not our responsibility. Have we not admitted—and think where the admission carries you—that countries under the British flag have a right to their religion unrestricted, and even at times supported by the British Government? Are we not a great Mahomedan Power, and do not we tolerate religions compared with which that of Mahomed is a gospel of mercy, truth, and justice? And you cannot separate morality from religion. If you look after morality you will find you are trenching very closely on the confines of religion. What you already consent to in the case of religion you are obliged to do in the case of a great deal of what is called morality,

In conclusion, I will say that before you carry out your decision, even in respect of the steps which you have taken as a sort of preliminary to a more important interference, had you not better appoint this Commission, had we not better see whether the charges are well-founded? I have already reminded you that you are not risking anything by doing this, except, perhaps, the reversal of some cherished but erroneous conviction. If your views are confirmed you are losing nothing in the way of your ultimate action or time. Will the Government not be wise, then, and grant this Commission? Are they not unjust if they refuse it? Is it not wrong in a great Government which necessarily represents and is responsible for the Empire to allow charges of this kind to be brought and to be circulated and to be believed without any sufficient investigation? I asked the right hon. Gentleman a civil question a short time ago, but I received to the question nothing but a very curt answer. When I first proposed this inquiry at the opening of the Session I thought myself that the tone of the right hon. Gentleman was rather in favour of the inquiry for which I asked. In the interval something had occurred to change his mind. The position at the present moment is one of absolute refusal to an inquiry; but I say that you must desire to have the information so as to give the Government a basis on which they may safely proceed, and thus to avoid the greater part of those tremendous risks which I have endeavoured to bring before the House. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'this House declines to proceed with the Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill without an assurance from His Majesty's Government that they will recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire and report on the economic and moral effects of the system of Indentured Labour at present in operation in the Transvaal.'"—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham asks us to decline to proceed with the consideration of the Consolidated Fund Bill until we have appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the moral and economic effects of Chinese labour in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman has disclosed his Amendment at the last possible minute, and therefore I hope that he will not think I desire to treat it with any disrespect or discourtesy by not giving him as full a reply on this question in all its branches as I should have wished to do to a right hon. Gentleman of his great position in the House. But the right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech touched on many subjects which, I think, were hardly relevant to the proposal for the appointment of a Royal Commission. I do not intend to enter into a discussion of the technical details of how the labour supply of the Witwatersrand mines may be stimulated or expanded, nor do I think I should profitably detain the House by an examination of those various native customs which the right hon. Gentleman referred to, or by plunging into a somewhat perplexing dissertation on the different classes of morality with which the right hon. Gentleman regaled us towards the close of his remarks. The right hon. Gentleman has drawn for us a dark picture of the situation in South Africa and of the misdeeds of the Government, and of the dangers and disasters which he apprehends may follow from them. What is the right hon. Gentleman's remedy for all this? A Royal Commission. I admire that touching faith in the virtue and efficacy of Royal Commissions which the right hon. Gentleman has been able to preserve through his many years of Parliamentary life. For my part, having seen the utility and efficacy of Royal Commissions appointed under the late Administration, I observe that they were usually appointed with a desire to hang up a subject or to stifle a popular demand by battening it down under a mass of bulky Blue-books. I really think that the right hon. Gentleman before making this demand upon us for a sovereign remedy for all the evils of South Africa should have thought out clearly what is the sort of Royal Commission that he desired. It is, he says, to be a Commission to inquire into the moral and economic aspects of this question. I should have thought that, if it were desired to inquire into the economic aspects of this most complicated and technical question, it would have been probably desirable that the Commission should be appointed to consist principally of mining experts, of people who had great experience of the working of gold mines and also of native labour. But if, on the other hand, we are to inquire into the moral issues which now excite the concern of the right hon. Gentleman, I do not suppose that such a body would be specially well suited, whatever their technical qualifications, to investigate the moral aspects of the question. [An HON. MEMBER: Why not?] Is it then seriously contended that a Commission of mining experts should be appointed in order to investigate questions of morality? I submit that on the face of it the right hon. Gentleman would require, not one Commission, but two Commissions, to inquire into two sets of circumstances which are totally separate. Let me say, first of all, that His Majesty's Government remain of the opinion which was conveyed to the right hon. Gentleman by the Prime Minister, that no useful purpose would be served at this juncture by the appointment of such a Commission or Commissions as he suggests. We do not think that it would allay the anxiety and the uncertainty by which the South African situation is surrounded. We think also that, while the inquiry was being prosecuted, it would be possible that the unrest and disturbance might reach a height greater than will be attained if nothing of the sort is done. Taking first of all the Commission of mining experts, I am bound to say I do not believe that the investigations of such a Commission would alter the general position of this controversy. I do not think that a Commission of mining experts, if they arrived at conclusions favourable to Chinese labour, would appease many of the opponents of Chinese labour in South Africa, nor would they procure the general assent of South Africans to the system. I am quite sure that if such a Commission came to conclusions unfavourable to Chinese labour it would not convince the mine-owners, for it is said that they know their own business better than anyone else; and I am bound to say that I do not think the employers who are able to secure indefinite supplies of cheap labour will ever give them up merely because they are recommended to do so by the report of a Commission. It would be in conflict with the general policy of self-government as declared by the Government to institute such a Commission as this. If it reported before responsible government were given, and if this report were adverse to the system, it would throw the responsibility for immediate action on us. If, on the other hand, it reported after the grant of responsible government—as I should expect it most certainly would—the recommendation would clearly not decide the question. The question of Chinese labour would be fought out in the Transvaal Assembly on Party lines, and it would be certainly decided over the heads of any Commision, and without particular reference to any report which a Commission might make.

Now let me approach the other section of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. Would such a Commission remove the objections which, rightly or wrongly, but with perfect sincerity, are entertained in this country? Let us first of all take the question of outrages to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. Do we stand in need of any more information on this subject? [Cries of "Yes."] We have here in the Blue-book published at the beginning of this session Lord Selborne's account of his investigation of the charges which were made by Mr. Boland. Lord Selborne is clear in saying that these charges were exaggerated; but he is also perfectly clear in showing that there was a considerable foundation for them, and that improper and illegal practices prevailed to a very considerable extent and for a considerable time over a large portion of the Witwatersrand region. Lord Selborne says—

> "Now, it is not denied, and, indeed, I have already informed you, that prior to June, 1905, illegal corporal punishment, after trial by the mine authorities, was widely resorted to as a disciplinary measure on the mines of the Witwatersrand; and it cannot be disputed that, where administered, it was administered in the manner described in Mr. Boland's letter, *i.e.*, in a manner borrowed from the practice of the Chinese Courts of Justice. I do not defend such proceedings, but I repeat what I have already stated, that I am convinced that they have entirely ceased since Mr. Jamieson's assumption of office as Superintendent of Foreign Labour."

And again—

> "Mr. Mackarness's letter is accompanied by a reproduction of a photograph of a Chinese coolie being punished by being made to wear what is termed in China the 'cangue.' Mr. Mackarness's description of this form of punishment is substantially accurate. I absolutely condemn its use, which is clearly illegal; but, as in the case of flogging, I am quite satisfied that this form of punishment has been wholly discontinued since June last."

I should have thought that this report, written on the authority of Lord Selborne, the Governor appointed by the late Government, would have satisfied hon. Members opposite. Lord Selborne sat for a long time in the Cabinet with right hon. Gentlemen on the Bench opposite, and certainly no one would be more inclined, more eager, to free any British subject abroad from unwarrantable and unfair charges of this character than Lord Selborne. But with the utmost frankness and candour, and without the slightest exaggeration, Lord Selborne has thought it to be his duty to place on record an admission that such practices prevailed. Although I do not deny that a Commission rummaging about on the Witwatersrand from month to month might accumulate a larger body of evidence, I do not think that it would overthrow the conclusions to which Lord Selborne has come—conclusions which have justified the alterations which the Government have decided to make in the Ordinance, as well as the speeches which have been delivered in condemnation of the system as instituted by the late Government. But would it remove the other and wider objections? I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has ever properly comprehended the objections put forward on this side of the House to the use of Chinese labour. Perhaps some hon. Gentlemen may think that this is one of those unreal objections put forward for the purpose of assailing the political opponents of the Government; yet I should have thought that the spectacle of a white community consisting of no more than 120,000 adult males, proposing to erect itself permanently upon a foundation now of 60,000—I believe it was contemplated that the numbers would be very nearly doubled—imported labourers from the other end of the world, who are restricted to the lowest possible form of employment, who are prohibited from raising themselves by any skill which they may have in their trade, who are forced to live—these 60,000—in a state of unnatural celibacy, who are prohibited from residing, at the conclusion of their contract, in the country which their labours have enriched, I should have thought that that would have been considered by the right hon. Gentleman, with all his wide experience of human nature and life, as a somewhat unsatisfactory footing on which to build a State. That is not an objection which the Report of a Commission on the facts which indeed are not in dispute between us would remove. I have heard it said that the majority of highly educated people do not agree or sympathise with the views of the Liberal Party and of the democracy of this country upon the subject of Chinese labour. Well, Sir, I can quite understand that a man who works with his brain, however hard he works, cannot —unless he has a gift of imagination, the rarest and perhaps the best of all gifts— understand how this alliance, this conjunction between cosmopolitan capital and the immense unmeasured reservoirs of Asiatic cheap labour, how this strange conjunction which the improving civilisation of the world has, I think for the first time, rendered possible—I do not think it is easy, I say, for a man who works with his brain to understand how such a conjunction strikes the man who has nothing to sell but the sweat of his brow. I say the apprehension which is felt by the working masses in this country of such a system, such a conjunction, becoming permanent and extending in the future is well founded, for, if that were the case, it would strike a deadly blow at the under-pillars of European civilisation. That again is an objection which I do not think the Report of a Commission would be likely to remove. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that uncertainty is bad for trade, and I only wish he had thought of it before. But a Royal Commission, which is his panacea for all evils—he is so fond of them that, when he cannot institute them under the authority of the Government, he institutes a private Commission of his own—would not terminate the uncertainty which prevails; it would only aggravate the uncertainty, because of the greater disturbance, heat, and partisanship which would be developed while it was engaged in its labour. There would still remain the uncertainty of the decision of the Transvaal Government. The right hon. Gentleman takes that for granted. He is quite certain that the Transvaal Assembly will not decide in favour of humanitarian views.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not say that. [MINISTERIAL and LABOUR cries of "You did."]

*MR. CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman said that the people of the Transvaal were not able to share our sentimental or humanitarian views. The right hon. Gentleman assumes that the decision of the Transvaal Assembly will be in favour of a continuance of Chinese labour. We are not so certain of that.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: You said you thought it probable.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No, on the contrary; the right hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong. I put the two alternatives. The first alternative was that they decided against the continuance of Asiatic labour; then I said, in that case all would go well, and the policy which the Government have adopted would have been vindicated in a complete and convincing form. In the second alternative, I admit I sketched less rosy possibilities, but I expressed no opinion at all, in the second speech I made on this subject, as to which of those alternatives it was more likely that the Transvaal would adopt. In the first speech which I had the honour to address to the House of Commons on this question I distinctly said His Majesty's Government had every hope that the Transvaal Assembly will come to a decision with which His Majesty's Government may find themselves in agreement. But that uncertainty, whatever it is, would not be removed by the appointment of a Commission. Is not Chinese labour in itself rather an element of uncertainty. When I contemplate this great industry, upon which so much of the future of the Transvaal, upon which so much of the economic development of South Africa as a whole depends—when I contemplate that great industry, standing as it does upon a basis of speculative finance, and supplied from day to day by a stream of Chinese labour which is liable to interruption at any moment by the caprice of an Oriental ruler [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, Oh."], I incline to think that of all the elements of uncertainty which have been introduced into the South African situation the element of Chinese labour is the most disturbing and the most dangerous. No one will dispute for a moment that the gold mines are the mainspring of the modern development of South Africa, and we shall all agree with the right hon. Gentleman in the great importance which he attaches to fostering the development of that industry and not unnecessarily hampering it. But if Chinese labour is of such importance, what a pity it is that the right hon. Gentleman treated it with such levity. Every one knows that in the debate on the Address the right hon. Gentleman attacked the policy of the Government, not on the ground that the Government were going too far in what they were doing against Chinese labour, but he endeavoured to excite censure against the Government on the part of their supporters by representing that they were not going far enough. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] And he even allowed himself to say that he knew—how he knew I do not investigate—that the mineowners had been consulted on the policy and were perfectly satisfied. Now the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London has come back refreshed with the latest views of the Stock Exchange. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] The right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham is now what I believe he once called Lord Hartington, the "late" Leader of the Opposition, and now he has very obligingly entirely changed his position in regard to the policy of the Government upon Chinese labour. Just as before he endeavoured to inflame the feelings of some of the supporters of the Government who take the most extreme views upon this question by representing that they were not going far enough, so now he endeavours to inflame the feelings of the Colonies by representing that some fearful collision between the Colonies and the Mother Country upon the question of self-government is likely to occur. As the right hon. Gentleman has brought this question into the arena of our debates to-day, I must take the opportunity of saying that I do not believe that the course he has adopted in the discussion of the Chinese question has been a wholly patriotic course. The right hon. Gentleman has contracted deep obligations to this country in respect of South Africa. At his bidding, and on the faith of his instincts and foresight as a statesman, and by the force of the appeals he addressed to the House and the country, this nation and the Empire have made unparalleled sacrifices for South Africa. No sooner had the war come to an end, and while all the business of settlement was still upon hand, the right hon. Gentleman got tired of the South African situation, pushed it away from him as a toy which had ceased to amuse, and embarked at once upon another adventure which was as rash and as uncalculated as the first, and the only difference between the two was that, whereas the first enterprise of the right hon. Gentleman has had the effect of nearly ruining South Africa, the second enterprise has had the effect of politically ruining himself. His Majesty's Government are deeply conscious of the anxiety of the South African situation. We are not responsible for the repeated raising of these debates. We know how difficult and complex these questions are, how every word spoken by unpractised speakers is carried to Colonies concerned, and how it is very often represented there in the worst possible light. We know the tremendous ramifications of newspapers which support the right hon. Gentleman and which carry his words also to the Colonies concerned, and we know it is in his power, in Opposition though he be and with however insufficient a following behind him, to cause anxiety and doubt in the Colonies because of the great attention that is paid to everything he says.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: You said I was politically ruined.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman may still retain some capacity for evil. Therefore, His Majesty's Government do regret the repeated raising of these debates, which are sprung upon us at a moment's notice, and which are pressed with insistence, in the hope, as I believe, that something may be said which will furnish further capital to the right hon. Gentleman and his supporters in the country. The policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to Chinese labour has been laid quite clearly before the House. We have redressed, and we are redressing, those features of the Ordinance which we consider unsatisfactory. We desire to leave the decision of the question to the Transvaal Assembly, which will be formed as soon as reasonably possible, having regard to the most important constitutional issues at stake. It is not proposed by the Government to exercise over the Transvaal, when it is a responsible self-governing Colony, any powers or restraints which are not now exercised, and which have not been frequently used, over every self-governing Colony of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the self-governing Colonies would never tolerate the idea of the Imperial Government's being a party to the decision of questions which solely affected themselves. He said that they would never tolerate any interference by us in any action they might take with regard to Chinese labour. It is a curious thing that I was reading the other day in *The Times* the account of a case which occurred in Western Australia which bears on this very point. It seems that the Legislature of that Colony passed the Factory Bill of 1904, which, I gather, inadvertently received the sanction of Mr. Lyttelton as Colonial Secretary and became law. The Colonial Secretary seems to have imperfectly apprehended the character of the measure. It was an Act for restraining Chinamen, curiously enough, and other Asiatics from working long hours, which would make their competition injurious to white men. A prosecution was instituted under the Act against an employer whose Chinese labourers had worked longer hours than the Act permitted. The employer appealed to the High Court of Western Australia. The case for the appellant was based upon a reference to all these questions of constitutional morality upon Magna Charta, and all these principles of British freedom which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham mistakenly assumes are only honoured and respected in these islands. Mr. Justice Carter, a judge of the High Court of Western Australia, said, in summing upon this case—

> "The discussion which has taken place before us on the constitutional question has been very interesting, and I trust that at some future date this Court may have an opportunity of again hearing the arguments on this question, and of arriving at an opinion; and I trust that when that time does arise, we shall have a bench of at least three judges. I express no opinion, nor do I desire to express my opinion, upon the arguments which have been urged before us, but I will say this, that it seems to me that this Factories Act is the most extraordinary piece of legislation"

Mr. Churchill.

—I ask the House to mark this—

> "and I am astonished that objection was not taken to it by the Imperial authorities. Portions of it are apparently adopted from the Queensland and New Zealand Statutes, but apparently the most stringent clauses referring to the Chinese and Asiatic races in Western Australia are original."

Here, then, is a judge of the High Court of Western Australia expressing astonishment that the Imperial authorities had not more carefully examined colonial legislation which came to this country for approval. Yet the right hon. Gentleman tries to make out that we propose to embark upon a wholly new procedure in regard to colonial policy. One other quotation I will make. When the right hon. Gentleman was at the Colonial Office in 1897 he himself made a departure upon what he would have us believe is a totally new form of treating responsible self-governing Colonies; and the curious part of it is that the right hon. Gentleman did so upon those very grounds of morality which he now says ought never to be put forward as a cause for Imperial intervention. A Bill was passed by the Newfoundland Legislature which, it appears, would enable the Party in power to exercise very improper influence over the conduct of elections. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of a letter which he authorised to be sent from the Colonial Office, expressed himself as follows—

> "The effect of the measure would be to enable the political Party, for the time being in power, to employ public funds for the purpose of corruptly securing themselves in office. Mr. Chamberlain hesitates to believe that it is the deliberate wish of Newfoundland electors that the public funds should be so employed, and feels that it would be impossible for him to advise Her Majesty to assent to such a measure in its present shape. He trusts, therefore, that you will take the earliest opportunity of bringing it again before the Legislature with a view to its further consideration and to the introduction of amendments."

And this is the new constitutional departure which, it is represented, we intend to make; this is the application of a new system of morals to our colonial policy. I need hardly say to the House of Commons that His Majesty's Government entertain a most sincere respect for those great traditions of self-government which have always been, and will always be, the guard-rails of Liberal colonial policy. We have no intention of going in the slightest degree beyond the powers which we properly possess; and having regard to the immense importance of these issues in South Africa no effort on our part will be neglected to promote the welfare of the great industry concerned, or to prevent any evil collision or deadlock arising between the Imperial Government and the Assembly which is about to be created in the Transvaal.

Now, I have done my best to reply to the points raised by the right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech. I am sure it is not out of any desire to be discourteous to him that the Prime Minister has refused the Royal Commission. It is only because we think that so far from simplifying the difficulties and allaying the uncertainties it would rather aggravate them, without any compensating advantage that we are unable to accede to his wish. Let me say, in conclusion, that if we desired counsel and guidance in regard to this grave situation in South Africa, it is not to the right hon. Gentleman we should appeal, however great our difficulties might be, for we know that if we have to find some path that will lead us into a happier state of affairs than now prevails in South Africa, it will not be through any assistance we may receive from the patriots and Imperialists who sit on the opposite benches; but it will be in spite of every obstacle that perverted ingenuity, stimulated by resentment of defeat, can suggest to them.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) thought the speech of the Under-Secretary would do little to reassure those people in this country who did not think that the policy which was being pursued by His Majesty's Government at the present time was a wise or a safe one. He did not think the speech of the hon. Gentleman, though more careful in its terms and more vague and uncertain than usual, would do more than to incite a further demonstration against our fellow-countrymen in South Africa by the people in this country who, through sentiment or ignorance, were inclined to take what he might call the anti-colonial or anti-Imperial view. There was no use disguising the fact that there was a considerable body of people in the Liberal Party who did not believe in the Colonies, and they would receive encouragement from the speech of the Under-Secretary. What he had to say came from some knowledge of the country of which the hon. Gentleman had been speaking in such eloquent and rhetorical terms. The hon. Gentleman spoke of founding a State upon servile labour, and said that Oriental labour was an ill basis upon which to build up a State. That was to say that Oriental labour was the whole basis upon which to build up a State in the Transvaal. He would refer the hon. Member when he spoke of 60,000 Chinese in the Transvaal to the 60,000 Orientals in Natal.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): They are citizens.

*SIR GILBERT PARKER asked what that had to do with it. The hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool was a little too swift in his interruption. In Natal the prosperity of the Colony had been built up by black labour—native Kaffir labour, Zulu labour, and Indian labour. Did the hon. Member challenge the civilisation of Natal and the condition of its industries from either a moral or political point of view? Did they find in Natal any demonstration that the citizenship here was alone of that high standard which the hon. Gentleman represented so well in this country amongst his fellow-citizens? If we pursued that line of argument to its logical conclusion we should also have to rule Queensland out, because the civilisation of Queensland was built up by native and imported Polynesian labour. The hon. Member had spoken of the civilisation of the Transvaal being built up at the caprice of Oriental rulers. Such a phrase might have been expected from the pen of a clever journalist, but not from the mouth of the Minister to whom they looked to allay the anxiety now felt in the Transvaal as to what course the Government were going to take — an anxiety which his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham well understood. The Royal Commission had been refused on two grounds; one, that it would be necessary to send out a combination of mining experts in order to appreciate their judgment. The hon. Gentleman repudiated the idea that those mining experts would have any authority to inquire into the moral aspects of the question, so that if a Royal Commission were to be sent out, the hon. Gentleman, he supposed, would choose for that purpose a deputation of the prevention of profanity league or some kindred association housed in Exeter Hall. He supposed the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary expected the Unionist Party and the Colonies to take his words seriously, and unfortunately his position was such that they were obliged to take them as the serious words of the Government. But when the hon. Gentleman presented to the House the reasons why a Royal Commission should not be sent to South Africa, he could not possibly think that all those who sat with the hon. Gentleman on the Government Benches were in accord with him, or that they would offer the same reasons for its refusal. The hon. Gentleman appeared to have the idea that the mining industry of the Transvaal could be carried on by white labour, and he had made some statement recently as to the comparative cost of production. But did the hon. Gentleman seriously think they could get cheap white labour in the mines there, and preserve the mining industry in the condition of prosperity in which it now was? Had the hon. Gentleman read the experience of Mr. Creswell, who showed that when 8s., 9s., and 10s. a week was paid for cheap white labour on the Village Reef mine, the wages paid to white skilled labour had to be reduced in order to pay such sums to the white unskilled labour? White unskilled labour could not live on 8s. and 9s. a day. The cost of bare living in the Transvaal was £16 a month. The experiment of cheap white labour in the Transvaal has been tried and had proved a failure, and if it were tried elsewhere the result would be the same. In order to insure that there should be 300 men always in the Village Main Reef mine a thousand were passed through Mr. Cresswell's hands in the course of six months. And the hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that his expression of opinion with regard to cheap white labour was only meant to cover a difficult point in his political experience. These difficult points would become much more difficult if the kind of statements which the hon. Gentleman had made concerning the veto—made with more restraint to-day, he noticed—continued to be made. The instances the hon. Gentleman gave of his right hon. friend's so-called interference were ludicrous in the extreme. To give advice to the Transvaal on a matter not of great consequence to that colony was practical, but any interference with the judgment of the people of the colony would be disastrous. Let them presume that the Government of the Transvaal passed a Chinese Ordinance securing to the colony a continuance of Chinese labour, a thing which they believed to be absolutely necessary to preserve not only the gold industry, but every other industry in South Africa in order to give it its present condition of prosperity, and let them presume that by a veto of this Government they were prevented from carrying out that Ordinance. Did the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division think these people were of a different sort of make from ourselves, and that they would act differently from ourselves in the same position? Did the hon. Gentleman realise that these men, who represented the interests, industrial and commercial, in the Transvaal, were men of our own race, who had the same independence of thought, and who, if we in one way or another interfered in these affairs would resent in set terms any interference on our part to hamper or destroy the product of their own industry? He did not think there was any one who had any interest at all in the Transvaal who was not aware that in the Transvaal at the present time there was a most alarming state of uncertainty as to the action the Government would take. As the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had pointed out, uncertainty was bad for trade. He was not one of those who would willingly cripple the efforts of the Government in settling the Chinese difficulty, if they were only going to alter certain minor conditions of the Ordinances. He thought they could bear a good deal of recrimination if the alterations to be made made the conditions more oppressive so far as the mineowners were concerned and more lenient so far as the Chinese were concerned. To that they did not take exception. What they did take exception to was that the Government, instead of leaving this matter to the Transvaal to settle under responsible self-government, were going to say to the Transvaal that if they did something not in accordance with the ideas of the Imperial Government in this matter proper restraint would be placed upon them. That could only mean one thing, which was "proper restraint," as interpreted by the hon. Gentlemen opposite—the Imperial veto. The speech which the hon. Gentleman had made to-day would, he ventured to say, be received in the Transvaal with the same doubt, with the same criticisms, and with the same indignation which his previous speeches had evoked. The hon. Gentleman would find that he had only stimulated the determination of the Transvaal to have their own way. The mining industry, he thought, was not quite understood in this House. It was the one great industry of the country, of the whole of South Africa; it was not, as some supposed, a speculative industry. Any one who had been on the reefs and had seen the amount of machinery at work there—most of which was made in England—could never again look at the Transvaal mining industry as a speculative industry engineered by people from Park Lane bent on meeting great fortunes. It was true that some fortunes had been made, but they were made before the Chinese came in and were made out of the use of native labour. The mines were the real basis upon which the future development of the country must rest, and to interfere with their prosperity would be to interfere with the progress of the Transvaal as a whole. It was important in this connection to bear in mind that prosperity was the cement which would be most efficacious in binding together Boer and Briton in South Africa.

*MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said the hon. Member who had just spoken seemed to imagine that South Africa could be made prosperous and contented only by the aid of Chinese labour. Most Ministerialists were of exactly the opposite opinion. A great British Colony could not be built up by the aid of Chinese labour. If the money spent in recruiting Chinese labour and building compounds had been used for cheapening living in South Africa, we should have found respectable white working men settling in the colony. When they saw capitalists on one side and Chinamen on the other, whose only object was to work the mines out and then leave the country altogether, did anyone think a market would be created for British goods? A quarter of the number of labourers, if white, with their wives and families out in South Africa, would make a far better market for British goods than the Chinese did. The Leader of the Opposition, in a speech he made recently, gave his audience to understand that South Africa would be ruined if the mines had not Chinese labour. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman was not aware that in 1898 the mines in South Africa paid nearly £5,000,000 in dividends without a single Chinaman being employed. How, then, could he say that South Africa would be ruined if there was not Chinese labour in the mines? More than that, from 1897 to 1898 the output of gold in South Africa increased by nearly 1,000,000 ounces. In fact, the output of gold since Chinese labour had been imported had not increased in so great a ratio as it did without Chinese on the Rand. The Leader of the Opposition had quoted the opinion of newspapers in favour of Chinese labour, but such papers as the *Leader* and the *Star* of Johannesburg were notoriously under the influence of the mineowners. It was not the opinion of the Transvaal. If hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side wanted the opinion of the Transvaal, why did they not have a plebiscite taken before the Chinese Labour Ordinance was passed? The Ordinance had been the greatest curse a British Government had ever foisted on a British Colony, and it would never create a real British Colony and one that would help the mother country by taking her goods. If the policy of indentured labour were continued, as soon as the mines were worked out—and, according to the great authorities, the output of gold would begin to diminish in about twenty-five years—the chances were that Johannesburg would eventually become derelict, and the Transvaal would revert to the Boers. If we were to have a prosperous British Colony in South Africa the mining industry must be principally worked with white labour. He believed this could be done, because if they had Kaffir labour they could employ white labour as well. They could not have a white man and a black man digging in the same hole, but they could have different sets of workers. There were thousands of white labourers who would be only too glad to go to the Transvaal if they could make a living wage. That living wage could be paid and yet the mines could make good dividends. Fortunes in South Africa had not been made out of the gold-mining industry at all, but in the floating of mines. All the Park Lane money had not come from the working of the mines, but out of the pockets of the British public. Men got hold of a certain number of claims for which they paid perhaps £250,000, and in addition had £250,000 of working capital. They immediately put the mine on the British market at, say, £800,000. They did not issue a prospectus, but perhaps offered the shares at £4. The British public subscribed about £3,000,000, and that was where the money came from. Yet they were told they must have Chinese labour to pay dividends on these enormous capitals. It would be infinitely better for South Africa if there were a lot of white men there earning good wages, than to have Chinamen employed and that the dividends should be sent to Park Lane, Germany, and France, where he believed the greater portion of them went. He was a shareholder in South African mines before the war, and was still, and his opinion was that if they had not had a single Chinaman on the Rand they would be better off than they were to-day. The shares were worth more before the Chinamen went there. If the Chinamen had done any good the value of the shares would have appreciated. Therefore in every way possible, so far as he could see, the Chinamen were a very bad thing for South Africa and for this country. What we had to contemplate was this: if these mineowners were to have their own way, they would have 250,000 Chinamen in the mines, and he did not think anyone in the House would contemplate with equanimity such a vast preponderance of yellow men over the small white population. It had been seen that the Kaffirs were not quite so contented as people had been led to think, and if there was any such thing as a Kaffir rising and there were 250,000 Chinamen in the compounds, he did not think it would be a very happy state of affairs for the white population in the Transvaal.

*MR. BOULTON (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) said that in his view it would not be a dangerous thing on the part of His Majesty's Government to veto any legislation that the new Government might pass, if that legislation were similar to the Ordinance of the late Government. Nor did he think that our great Colonies would for a moment resent the action of His Majesty's Government in vetoing any such legislation, because our great Colonies were absolutely agreed that they did not approve of the action of the late Government in introducing Chinese labour into South Africa. There was the unanimous protest of the great Australian Colonies as expressed in the Commonwealth Parliament against the introduction of Chinese labour, and there was the same thing in New Zealand. Canada thought it was inadvisable under the circumstances to interfere, but the opinion of Canada from one end to the other was against the Chinese being brought into any of the great Colonies of the Empire. If the suggested veto were exercised under the circumstances he believed it would have the support of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and in that case he failed to see how it could be a menace to the Empire. As to the question of precedent, those who had studied the constitutions of the colonies and their relation with the mother country knew it was a fact that the Imperial Parliament had a right of veto, and had exercised it with regard to Australia and Canada, though, of course, it had never been exercised unless a Colony had passed something which was *ultra vires*. Surely, if the Transvaal Government were to pass an act of the legislature which authorised the practice of slavery, or anything which was akin to slavery, His Majesty's Government would be justified in exercising that veto. There were many reasons why personally he would much sooner His Majesty's Government, when they gave a constitution to the Tranvaal, inserted—as had been done in the case of California—an express provision prohibiting actual slavery, or anything partaking of the nature of slavery. If that was done then it would be for the courts of law to decide what was, and what was not slavery and His Majesty's Government would not then be obliged to exercise the veto. He himself, knowing something of the great Colonies, did not believe that the Transvaal, if the new constitution was based on popular representation, would do anything to introduce into the Colony anything partaking of the nature of slavery, but if they did His Majesty's Government would be entitled to exercise the veto upon it, and in doing that he believed they would have the support of all the self-governing Colonies in the Empire.

*MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) said he had heard laudations of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister by a certain section of the Press in this country who had been his good friends during the election, and to whom the right hon. Gentleman had expressed his deep sense of his obligation —a section for which he had the most profound contempt, and especially the section which emanated from Stonecutter Street and issued in the morning the *Morning Leader* and in the evening *The Star*. It was the *Morning Leader* which was the source of that cartoon which it delighted to describe as the "famous poster," that pictorial falsehood which dealt with Chinese labour and called it "slavery," but which he (the speaker) designated the "infamous poster." Yet the Party opposite professed themselves perfectly satisfied with it, notwithstanding the fact that right hon. Gentlemen were juggling and playing with the word "slavery," and betraying a strange want of unanimity as to what the condition of the Chinese in the Transvaal really was. Even the last speaker had repeated as an accepted fact that slavery did exist, while the leaders preferred to use such phrases as "ingredients of slavery," and "taint of slavery." For British Ministers to be driven into a corner and to discriminate so finely as to what prevailed in the Transvaal was a sorry spectacle for this great Empire. When the Government declined to give effect to the suggestion which had been made from time to time that they should appoint a Commission of inquiry to ascertain what were the true facts, the only inference which he as a lawyer practising in the courts could draw was that they were afraid to submit the circumstances to an impartial tribunal lest it should be found that the verdict would be against the methods they had used, and on the strength of which they had sailed into power. An hon. Member opposite who talked with an air of authority about South Africa and its problems had been obliged to admit that he spoke from other than the point of view of practical experience, since he had never been there. It was this kind of assumed knowledge on the part of politicians of which he (the speaker) complained. Hon. Members condemned persons and systems of which they had no personal knowledge, and in the face of the recorded experience of those who, by long residence and practical acquaintance, were entitled to speak with authority. References were sometimes made in the South African debates to the magnates who lived in Park Lane, but he did not see why they should be subjected to obloquy by hon. Members, some of whom did not live far from that place. The truth was, and it had been told over and over again, that mining shares were held not merely by persons directly interested in mining operations, but by the great volume of the British investing public, and the effect of these charges of slavery was to hurt a great number of innocent persons who had invested their money with the best expectation that they would have the ordinary reward for their investment. They were all familiar with the argument about the Colony of New Zealand. In that Colony the question of slavery in connection with the employment of the Chinese in the South African mines never entered into their calculations. It was purely a question of the white man as against the coloured man, and, therefore, they had not considered it from the moral or the economic point of view. Australia for the same reason determined that whatever came she would not have a coloured population. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Hear, hear."] An hon. Gentleman said "Hear, hear." Did he know that in the northern part of that great Colony there were mines of very great wealth which could only be worked by coolie labour? Because of the policy of preventing any but white men from working, these mines must remain in a virgin condition merely to keep up a fetish which was economically wrong and absurd.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Will the hon. Gentleman be good enough to say what the mines are that can be worked only by coolie labour in Australia?

*MR. NIELD said he was always ready to give information. He should have thought that it was information which the hon. Gentleman himself possessed. There were mines on the north coast which, owing to conditions of temperature, could not be worked by British-born subjects. Rather than admit coolie or Kaffir labour the colony allowed these mines to go unworked and unproductive. He ventured to think that the restriction put by California on the introduction of Chinese labour had arisen from a totally different reason. There had been plenty of Chinamen allowed to enter San Francisco in the past. He did not think he was very far wrong in stating that the condition of San Francisco to-day was very largely due to the industry of Chinamen. Having utilised the Chinaman for their purpose, they saw what the late Mr. Gladstone said of him, that the Chinaman was much more sinned against than sinning, and that he was disliked for his virtues and not his vices. The Chinaman was capable of exercising great frugality and of laying by more of this world's goods than his American competitor. That was the reason why America had prohibited Chinese labour. [AN HON. MEMBER: Since 1879.] He took 1879 as a comparatively modern date. It was about that time that a great labour movement took place, and the people of America saw the necessity for some sort of protection. After all was said and done, if the Chinese were only allowed to go to the Transvaal unfettered and without being obliged to work under special conditions, he thought it would be found that industry generally in the Transvaal would be very much more developed. He had heard it suggested in this House that the Chinese were such a terrible people, that unless they were kept under restrictions partaking of slavery, or tainted with slavery, it was impossible for them to be properly controlled, and that the countryside would be laid waste by their depredations. A return was presented to the late Parliament showing the number of outrages alleged to have been committed by Chinamen who had escaped from the compounds. Hon. Members on the other side had held up their hands in pious horror at these crimes, although they were numerically comparatively small. But would hon. Members believe that those crimes were nothing to arouse any alarm on the part of the population of this country? Being a lawyer, he attended the assizes, and he could tell hon. Members that he was shocked when he first made the acquaintance of the assize calendar for the county of Durham. The calendars of crime in some of the northern counties of this country would, he ventured to think, compare with the offences stated to have been committed by the Chinese in South Africa, and not altogether unfavourably to the latter. He thought the time had come when they should clear their minds of cant altogether. Let them face the facts boldly. Let them admit that the conditions under which Chinamen were brought to the Transvaal were such as to compel them to prescribe these regulations, but do not let them say that they had to enforce these because of the inherent immorality or violence of Chinamen. It was done in order to keep faith with the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand and at the same time to meet a great and pressing emergency in South Africa. He was perfectly certain that the mine-owners would not have dreamt of introducing Chinese labour by choice. They had been compelled to do so by necessity, and they had incurred enormous cost in providing compounds for the men. He thought it would be more in accordance with the traditions of the Radical Party if the Government were to agree to the appointment of the Commission of Inquiry which had now been asked. This was the second time in the history of the great Liberal Party that they had refused to examine into the facts in a businesslike and thorough way, but had jumped to conclusions prompted by expediency, and in order to make Party capital for electoral purposes. They did this also in connection with the great fiscal controversy, and prevented an independent and non Party examination, preferring rather to go to the country on representations which were not founded on fact. He trusted that the Government would no longer resist the appeal for an impartial tribunal which would clear the honourable escutcheon of this country from the foul stains that had been thrown upon it.

MR. SEDDON (Lancaster, Newton) said that he was one of those Members returned at the last general election, who as a candidate spoke from the hustings of the conditions under which the Chinese indentured coolies worked in the Transvaal as conditions of slavery and contrary to all his ideas of British freedom. And not all the dialectical skill of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches or the "terminological inexactitudes" on the Ministerial side had altered his opinion. He believed he could speak for all the Labour Members and for the large majority of the working people of this country, in saying that they looked upon the introduction of Chinese coolies into South Africa as not only a flagrant breach of promises made by the late Government, but a breach of those institutions which were held dear by every Britisher. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham seemed to have had quite a passion for Commissions of late, and in asking for a new Royal Commission he referred to people in South Africa speaking the same language as ourselves. It might be true that some of these gentlemen had learned, as a linguistic feat, some words of the English language. But this was not a question of language, but a question of sympathy with British instincts. He asked whether the Member who spoke from the corner block at Johannesburg, who looked upon this House as an annexe of the Stock Exchange, and a hutch of guinea-pigs, represented the sentiments of the people of this country. Mr. Percy Talbot, who spoke for a big Rand firm with foreign names, had said that the natural fear on the Rand was that with the introduction of white unskilled labour there the same troubles would arise in South Africa as had prevailed in Australia, that by their combinations and trade unions they would be able to dictate the rate of wages and by their votes the policy of the country. That was the open and unabashed contention of the Rand mineowners. He asked the right hon. Member for West Birmingham who were the experts he would send out on this proposed Royal Commission to South Africa, and who were the people who spoke with authority in South Africa? On the Labour Commission of 1897 in South Africa there were two Labour representatives, and those gentlemen declared in their minority Report that there was a sufficiency of coloured labour, so far as the natives of South Africa were concerned, and that there was no necessity for the introduction of Chinese coolie labour. After that a great demonstration was held in Johannesburg, at which 5,000 white men were present, to protest against the intention of the Government to introduce Chinese indentured labour into the Colony. The hon. Member for Gravesend had brought a photo into the House from that reliable authority—the *Daily Graphic*—and had made light of the demonstration which took place in December last. The information of the hon. Member had evidently come from different sources from his own. In the early part of this year he received from Mr. Woods, Secretary to the Trade Council in Johannesburg, a type-written description of that meeting. Mr. Woods declared that it was necessary for his council to go to the expense of the type-written report because they could not trust the Press in South Africa, which was under the heel of the capitalists on the Rand. The hon. Member for Gravesend brought this photograph to belie that meeting as to its size. He was there to say, on the authority of Britishers in South Africa, who were just as anxious as Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House to bring about peace and prosperity in South Africa, that the Chinaman was not wanted, and that with the native the Britisher could do all that was required in the gold mines of South Africa. He would like to ask right hon. Gentlemen, including the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who seemed to be briefed for the Corner House in Johannesburg, this question—they heard a lot about the mortality in the mines of South Africa, but had the same conditions been applied to the gold mines of South Africa as were applied to the coal mines of this country? He was told on reliable authority that if the same precautions and regulations were in operation in the South African gold mines as were in operation in the coal mines of this country, the death rate would go down considerably and make it much more easy for white men to work the gold mines. When he was listening to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham he had in his mind one feature of all the debates that had taken place in this House. Either it was a question of cheap labour, or labour under decent conditions. If he remembered rightly, when the Factory Laws were being passed, Gentlemen stood up in this House and declared that it would be against the interests of the industry if they did anything to interfere with the morality of the men who were running the factories at the time. The argument was as old as the hills:—"Cheap labour is increasing." What for? He remembered the great price that had been paid for the subjection of South Africa, and he remembered who had suffered most. Hon. Members talked about the financiers and investors who were suffering in South Africa. But what about the Britisher? Many of them had shed their blood there. What about the working-classes of this country, who were taxed up to the teeth and whose scanty hoards had had to pay for this war? If there was any sacrifice made, it was by those who could ill afford it—the working-classes of this country. They ought to have some voice in deciding the future policy of South Africa. What was the result? The democracy of this country believed that the introduction of Chinese coolies into South Africa was slavery. They asked the Government to get rid of it at once, if possible, and failing that, they said:—"Get rid of it as soon as you can." He believed that an assurance had been given by the Under-Secretary for the Colonies that Chinese indentured labour in South Africa would finish some time—would finish eventually.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Oh, no; you are mistaken.

MR. SEDDON said he could not take the Leader of the Opposition as the interpreter of the Under-Secretary. If the Under-Secretary had not given the assurance, hon. Members below the gangway believed he had, and if he desired—perhaps he did not—their co-operation in the settlement of this question he would give them the assurance at once. They understood that the Government were determined that Chinese indentured labour should finish in South Africa. He hoped he was interpreting the intention of the Government rightly. If not, then he thought there was trouble ahead for somebody. He wanted to say, in conclusion, that he sympathised with those expressions that had been made on both sides of the House that this was a very serious question. He, along with a good number outside this House, felt that the war was wrong when it was undertaken. When it was being waged they were assured by right hon. Gentlemen now on the Opposition side of the House that it was a war for equal rights for all white men. Where was the right of the white now? He had a letter in his pocket which arrived from Cape Town only yesterday morning from a Britisher, which told him that there were thousands of white men walking the streets of Cape Town to-day. Many of them helped to bring about the overthrow of the two free Republics in South Africa. That was their return for their loyalty. He would remind hon. Members on both sides that there were higher claims than those of the Stock Exchange. These people had made sacrifices for the people of the British Empire, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider the questions of the development of South Africa not on the lines of indentured Chinese labour, but on lines by means of which he could alleviate the misery of white men who were now walking the streets without employment and in a starving condition.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is under the impression not only that has the Under-Secretary for the Colonies made a clear declaration of the policy of the Government, but that the declaration is to the effect that Eastern labour is in a short time, or at all events before long, to come to an end. He is, I think, mistaken in both particulars. The Under-Secretary has never pledged either the Colonial Office or the Government to terminate yellow indentured labour in South Africa.

MR. WALLACE (Perth): In existing conditions.

MR. BALFOUR: I do not know what line of escape the hon. Gentleman has got, or whether the Government contemplate that there should be yellow labour admitted not under existing conditions. Whether that is desirable or not I leave the hon. Gentleman who preceded me to consider.

MR. SEDDON: I am sorry to intervene, but I wish to make it perfectly clear that so far as the Party with which I am connected is concerned we have no race war. It is not against the Chinaman as a Chinaman, but the conditions under which he is permitted to land in South Africa, that we are opposed to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought that the view of the hon. Gentleman was similar to the view expressed earlier in the debate by the hon. Member for Preston, which was to the effect that if yellow or oriental labour was not introduced into South Africa, the white man would have a chance there, that there would be cottages springing up there in which white men would live with their wives and families, that they would go to South Africa in large numbers and carry the principles of British liberty with them, and that you would find that unskilled labour in South Africa would be British labour and not unskilled labour from Central Africa or the Far East. That, I understand, however, is not the view of the hon. Gentleman. He does not in the least object to the unlimited importation and unrestricted competition of oriental labour with British labour in the Transvaal, but he objects to the limitations which have been placed upon the indefinite introduction of the coolie from the East into all branches of industry. He only objects to the limitation of Chinese labour; he does not object to Chinese labour without limitations. That is a view which is perfectly arguable, but those who hold it cannot hold at the same time that their ideal is to see South Africa a country in which the unskilled as well as the skilled labour is carried on by Europeans and especially by men of British birth. The two things cannot exist together; that is certain. It is equally certain that the limitations to which the hon. Gentleman objects are in favour of the competiton of British and European work, and so far from being contrary to the ideal which some Gentlemen on that side of the House desire, they are in favour of it. I have corrected one error that the hon. Gentleman has made with regard to the Under-Secretary when I informed him that the Under-Secretary has given no such pledge. I will go further and say, so far as I understand the Under-Secretary's varying utterances, not only has he not promised to carry out that policy, but there is no particular or single policy he has promised to carry out. He has promised to carry out two or three policies, and they not consistent one with another. I was surprised to hear him repudiate the view which he quite distinctly expressed in the House that the Transvaal Government when they had obtained independence would probably exercise that independence in introducing Chinese labour. My right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham was perfectly accurate. I heard the Under-Secretary's speech, and this brief extract from *The Times* exactly accords with my recollection. Possibly the hon. Member did not say precisely what he meant, but these are the words he did use—

> "What chance was there of the Transvaal proposals being acceptable when put forward? He felt bound to say the chance was not a good one."

MR. CHURCHILL: I think it will be clear from the context that the question I asked was what chance was there of proposals being acceptable when put forward, assuming they were put forward.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether that greatly helps the hon. Gentleman. His Government propose to give self-government to the Colony. Three things may happen. The Colony may put forward no proposal at all, they may put forward proposals which are acceptable, or they may put forward proposals which are not acceptable. That they will put forward no proposal at all I think is in the highest degree improbable. Of the other two alternatives, the hon. Gentleman clearly laid it down in his speech that the probability was in favour of the proposals not being acceptable when and if put forward—he says it appears in the context, and I am prepared to take his exegesis of his own oration. If and when these proposals are put forward, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman and the Government the chance of their being acceptable is not a good one. I am bound to say that these words justify all the forebodings which those who know most about the feeling which our Colonies have with regard to this question of the Government interfering with the Colonies possessing self-government—put forward. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last but one, and professed to have great knowledge of the Colonies, was confident that none of the Colonies would raise the smallest protest if this country interfered to put down slavery. Yes, sir; but I myself think the Colonies would probably say "It is for each of us to judge what is or is not slavery. We do not hand over our own moral judgment to the Mother Country; we claim that as part of the rights of Englishmen to whom self-government has been given." Although it may be that the inhabitants of Canada, of New Zealand, and of Australia may think the Government of the self-governing Transvaal has made a great mistake, but I am perfectly confident they will say they are the judges, they and they alone, of their own action, and however much either Great Britain or the other Colonies may differ from them, it is a deliberate invasion of the traditions of this country that we should attempt to impose upon them our own ideas of precisely how they should conduct matters which are intimately bound up with their own welfare, I had almost said their own existence. I do not want to treat this matter with unnecessary controversy, and I do not want to go back to the past. I support my right hon. friend in pressing for this inquiry, not in order to justify us as against hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to what occurred at the General Election. Each of us probably will remain of the same opinion as to the justice or injustice of the attacks made upon us. I am looking forward to the future, and it is in order that the future may carry with it as little difficulty, as little misfortune, and as little peril to the Empire as possible, that I earnestly urge the Government to accede to our request. I venture to think the whole course of this debate has been really in favour of the inquiry suggested, and that the speeches of those who have nominally supported the Government have been really as much in favour of an inquiry as any speeches made on this side. For instance, the hon. Gentleman who has just at down said—

> "I am unregenerate; I hold to the case which I held to at the General Election. I used strong language about the existence of a system which I regard as slavery. I have not changed that opinion."

The hon. Gentleman I am perfectly certain honestly holds the views which he has expressed to the House, but I also am unregenerate, and I also hold the view which I expressed at the General Election. I certainly honestly came to the conclusion that the introduction of Chinese labour was in the interests of South Africa and the Transvaal, and was absolutely necessary. As between myself and the hon. Gentleman, I am perfectly prepared to let the matter sleep—at all events I do not wish to revive it at this moment. But as regards the future, I think the hon. Gentleman will agree with me that two men, both presumably intelligent, honest, and anxious to know exactly what is the condition of affairs in South Africa, ought to agree upon providing some machinery which should, if not decide the question between them, at all events give them facts which they can both accept. I, like the hon. Member, spoke strongly at the elections. I believe myself, as he believes himself, to have adequate grounds for the views which I put forward. To appoint this committee is, I think, the best policy in the interests of South Africa. I considered—and I am sure the hon. Gentleman will accept my statement—I considered only the situation in the Transvaal. I certainly honestly came to the conclusion that in the interest of South Africa and of the Transvaal this was an absolutely necessary measure. I need not trouble my head about gold magnates and the other extraneous considerations which have been dragged into this debate. I may have been mistaken. I will go this length with the House. It seemed to me that my case was so very clear that I had the very greatest difficulty sometimes in believing that those who took the opposite view were not, even unknown to themselves, violently swayed and prejudiced by those natural passions to which we are all, perhaps, unduly subject in moments of great political conflict. I acknowledge now that I have come to the conclusion that the belief which the hon. Gentleman and others have expressed to-day does represent a very genuine, real, and deep-rooted conviction in large classes of the community. I accept that, and I hope they will accept the statement which I make with equal certitude, that the policy of the Government was in no sense swayed—it may have been mistaken, or foolish, or unnecessary—by any consideration whatever except the good of a colony which at the time was under our control. When you have two sets of genuine and honest opinions brought into such sharp contrast, and when those opinions turn on matters of fact, is it not the common-sense thing to have an inquiry by which those matters of fact can be ascertained? Consider the speech that was made by, I think, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Prestwich. The hon. Gentleman drew a picture of South Africa as he would wish to see it—and I frankly admit that the South Africa that he wishes to see is the South Africa that I myself would very much desire to see. He says, "Why cannot you have South Africa covered with well-built cottages, with the cost of living lowered to a point which will make the wages of the white man remunerative to the white man? Why cannot you have the unskilled labourers here emigrating to another part of the Empire, enjoying prosperity and bringing with them their wives and families, and becoming the ancestors of a race English in speech, English in blood, English in sentiment—a plant, which shall spread to yet another portion of the world, a community not merely of the well-to-do, or the middle-class or the skilled artisan, but of every class, forming the majority of the population?" That is an admirable picture if only it could be carried out. And whether it can be carried out or not surely does depend upon a matter of fact which can be determined by adequate inquiry, and that is whether or not what is admitted on all hands to be, for the present, the great industry of the country, can be carried on except with the help of unskilled labour, remunerated at lower rates than those which Englishmen either could, or would, or ought to accept. That surely is a question of fact, and that is a question on which I do seriously think that the necessity for some certitude is greatly increased now that we know what, at all events, is one of the Government policies upon this matter. One of their policies is to allow the Transvaal Government to make its proposals, and then quarrel with its proposals if they do not like them. It is a serious enough matter for us to quarrel with or over-ride a self-governing colony, but to do that upon imperfect information, to do that with no adequate knowledge of what the real facts of the case are, to do that with the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, saying, with conviction, "I believe one set of opinions," and with another hon. Gentleman, say myself, saying with equal conviction and consistency, "I believe another set of opinions," without an appeal to a tribunal, the value of which, whether we accept it or not, both are prepared to recognise—is it not really ignoring the dangers and difficulties of the future to refuse now to carry out an inquiry which would give this House and any Government that was in power that knowledge without which it is really impossible to deal with the complicated and difficult question we have to deal with? By all means, if you wish, exclude any inquiry into the past. Assume, if you wish, that everything said about the abuse of the system under the late Government was true. If you do not want to inquire into that, let it alone. But, at all events, see what is going on now; see whether the system as it is now worked does really deserve or not the attacks which the hon. Gentleman is at present prepared to make upon it; see whether it is or is not the best possible form in which the unskilled labour necessary to the community may be introduced. I think every one who heard the Under-Secretary for the Colonies will admit that, at all events, he was very much put to it to find a reason for not giving an inquiry. He complained of the shortness of notice which my right hon. friend had given of his Amendment, and I presume that was the reason why he spent most of his speech in a personal attack upon my right hon. friend. That, I am aware, is a form of debate which requires no preparation on the part of the hon. Gentleman, or on the part of many of those who sit near him. That is a beverage which is always on tap. But, when he left that familiar field, what had he say to against this inquiry? "Oh," he said, "Commissions. We know what you mean by Commissions. Commissions are always expedients for deferring any action." That is a thing which Oppositions are very fond of saying against Governments, but I have never heard it said by a Government against an Opposition. These Gentleman cannot get accustomed to their places. The time will come when they will learn to put off the garb of Opposition which they wore with so much grace for so many years, and to accustom themselves both to the power and to the courtesy which ought to accompany power, when they are put in the possession of a following of 500—or is it 600—faithful henchmen. Surely the Under-Secretary was peculiarly unfortunate in this particular line of defence, because, if I remember, the great programme of the Liberal Government now in power which is slowly unfolding and unwinding itself before our eyes began with the promise of a Commission on canals. And, unless I am greatly mistaken, another Commission was promised last night to look into Trinity College, another Commission has been promised to look into sea-coast erosion, and a fourth Commission has been appointed to look into coal mine accidents. And there is a Commission to look into Post Office matters. That is five. Five Commissions in five weeks is not bad. And I am bound to say that when the hon. Gentleman, trading upon his ancient experience in another position, talked of the iniquities of Commissions, it showed surely a very small appreciation of the labours of other departments of governmental activity, and a very small relative appreciation of the importance of the subjects to be inquired into. I do not wish to undervalue sea erosion. I certainly do not wish to undervalue Trinity College, and even canals have my sincere respect. But I would ask the House whether any of the five subjects, even including the Post Office, are of so great importance as this great issue which has divided, and is dividing, honest and honourable men in this House and out of this House, and on the true knowledge of which so much must depend in the future conduct of what all admit is a very difficult situation? The Government may think, they certainly have said, that the object of the Opposition in regard to South African policy is simply to embarrass them. I can assure them that that is not the case. We feel very strongly upon certain aspects of the question; but this Motion of my right hon. friend might be considered surely as outside the area of bitter Party controversy. It refers only to the facts, it refers only to the future. We ask really to know under what conditions it is possible to carry on indentured labour, or, at all events, under what conditions it is now being carried on, and what kind of labour is necessary to deal with the mines. On that last subject, which is a vital one, not to the mineowners, but to the Transvaal, there seems to be a most extraordinary confusion of ideas in the minds of some hon. Members. It does not in the least matter for our purpose what was the original cost to the mineowner, or whether he has unduly watered his capital; whether he has or has not deluded the public, whether the shareholders have or have not been defrauded or deprived of their money. What is of importance, from the point of view of the Transvaal, to know is what constant production will enable the great industry to flourish; and by flourishing I do not mean paying big dividends: I mean paying working expenses with a reasonable profit. Call the capital what you like, you must pay for the working expenses of the mine, you must pay a fair interest on capital, else you will have no development, and you must pay, I suppose, a reasonable commercial interest. Estimate it at that. Put Park Lane and everything else out of your mind, or keep Park Lane for the country. But in discussing what is necessary for the Transvaal, the prosperity or the adversity, the wickedness or the virtue of the capitalist or the small investor—these things are of comparatively small importance. What is of importance is to know the conditions under which the industry can be carried on. That is a different question, and it is a question on which I believe expert opinion could give valuable information. I believe the hon. Gentleman who last spoke and myself would have much to learn from such an inquiry. I did my best to find out. The sources from which I obtained the views I hold may possibly not have been wholly trustworthy. Then appoint a trustworthy authority. Give me a chance. I used the best opinions at my disposal; but appoint a Commission to show whether I am wrong. I cannot understand on what grounds the Government refuse this. My right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham pointed out with unanswerable force that some of the objections which may be urged against some Commissions—namely, that they delay the settlement of a question which might be settled without a Commission—do not apply in this case. Not an hour's delay will be caused in the settlement of this great problem if you consent to our demands. Why do you refuse us? Is it the mere insolence of overgrown strength? Is it because you know yourselves to be so overwhelmingly strong in numbers that even a most respectful request is to be met with this kind of unargued opposition? Not the semblance of an argument has been advanced against the proposal. Very good speeches have been made against the Opposition, speeches of which I have nothing to complain. They were attacks upon us and upon the mine-owners: they were a repetition of the kind of speech with which we have all been familiar for the last few months; but none of them have been arguments against the inquiry. The hon. Member for Prestwich advanced no argument against it; nor did the hon. Gentleman who followed him on that side. As for the Under-Secretary, those who heard his speech heard a great deal of discussion of the general question, a great deal of abuse of my right hon. friend, a considerable unintentional perversion of his own previous utterances, and a general attack on Commissions; but against this Commission, against the request which we respectfully urge, not one thing that could be called an argument. We have no power to make our appeal effective. If argument is useless we have nothing else to show. I venture to say that argument we have put forward; and if now you express your intention of deliberately refusing information to this House upon subjects upon which the House is honestly but deeply divided, and if that refusal is going to carry with it, as I fear it may, ill consequences in the future, the responsibility must at all events rest upon the Government which has thus, as I think, made a great and unjustifiable misuse of its Parliamentary majority.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman complains of an unargued refusal which has been given to this proposal, and he makes this allegation after having listened to the speech of my hon. friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, which was a prolonged argument. I will repeat now briefly some of the arguments which my hon. friend used. But I am left greatly in doubt as to what the object of the two right hon. Gentlemen is. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham claims an inquiry in order that the culprits may be found and brought to punishment if misdeeds have been committed. The Leader of the Opposition, on the other hand, said, "Oh, we have nothing to do with the past."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, no, the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I should like an inquiry covering the past, present, and future. I thought right hon. Gentlemen opposite had an objection to going into matters which were historical, and I said in deference to their view, "By all means leave that out, if you like." But I should personally prefer an inquiry into the whole.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman in his speech did not give us much indication of deference to our view. He was emphatic on the subject that we should turn to the future and leave the past. Therefore, we are in the old dilemma—the old dilemma in which Castor says one thing, and Pollux says another. One right hon. Gentleman said, "Get it out of the area of bitter controversy; we have nothing to do with the past"; the other right hon. Gentleman wishes to inquire into the past. Sir, what are you to inquire into that you have not got already? If evidence is required of misdeeds and abuses under this system, you have abundant evidence in your own Blue-books. And it stands in the nature of things that there should be those abuses, because an unnatural system such as this necessarily leads to abuses. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham the other day on another subject used a phrase which was very much to the point. We were talking of flogging in the Navy, and he said he had often had to deal with cases of flogging when he was in charge of a great Department, and he added, "The difficulty is that you cannot depend upon your instruments." That is the case here above most other instances. Let this be distinctly understood. We have no quarrel with the Transvaal people or even with the leading men in the Tranvaal. We have no quarrel even with the working of the system—at least, that is not the main point. What we have a quarrel with are the Ordinances which prescribe certain conditions for the Chinese coolie which we believe to be contrary to the best traditions and the purest conscience and the highest views of the British people. No Royal Commission that you can appoint can tell us whether we are right or wrong. That is the feeling of the great majority of the British people. In this, surely, they are entirely within their proper sphere, because, as I have said, these Ordinances were passed by the late House of Commons, and at the instigation of the late Government. It is we who passed the Ordinances, and therefore we are responsible. Those of us who voted against them, or protested against them, of course have a slighter responsibility; but still we cannot altogether hold ourselves free, and that is what we complain of. We dislike having fastened upon a British colony certain Ordinances prescribing conditions of labour which we believe—I will repeat the phrase that I have often used—partake of the nature of slavery. But I think it is time we ceased to make any more to do about the particular phrase to be used. The other day the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone said that what the people of this country objected to was popular slavery, not technical slavery. It may not be technical slavery, but in the popular sense and the popular acceptation of the word it is slavery. I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that the people of this country are not going to stand anything of that sort of system in any country for which they have any responsibility. As to the question of the admission of Chinese to labour in the Colonies for the purposes of free labour, that I regard as a domestic matter in which we are not entitled to interfere. But if that involves—as I know I should not be candid if I did not admit that in South Africa it does involve—the imposition upon them of conditions which we think degrading to the human race, and certain to produce the evil results which in some cases have followed—then, if we find that, we shall have nothing to do with those conditions, and we will endeavour to bring them to an end as soon as possible. That is a perfectly plain and straightforward and intelligible position. My hon. friend the Under-Secretary asked, in stirring language, whether this unnatural labour was the sort of basis upon which to build a new and prosperous community. If its prosperity depended upon that, what sort of fate would be likely to be in store for that community? I do not like, even in the shortest way, referring to one condition of which we hear little, but which is really an important factor in the matter, but my hon. friend alluded to it when he said that these men were forced to live in compounds in enforced celibacy. We know how we insisted, in the early stages of this matter, upon ample provision being made for wives and children going with them; we know what promises were made; and we know how completely that intention has been thwarted, either by the want of will on the part of the authorities, or the want of disposition on the part of the men themselves. In either case you have created a state of things which is perfectly appalling. And that is the condition of labour on which the prosperity of these great mines is to depend, and on which you are to build up, forsooth, a great buttress to the pride of the British Empire. The people of this country really do not half understand what is going on. If they once realised it there would be short work made of it, and even of all those pecuniary interests which we have been endeavouring to guard as far as we can. Yes, we have guarded them by what we have done. We have given time when the natural impulse would have been to give no time; and we have said that the future policy with regard to Chinese free labour is to be left to the community under the new constitution, though the present conditions must at all costs be brought to an end. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, both to-day and on a previous occasion, made a great point of this interference with a self-governing Colony. He said he would only interfere where it was a matter of Imperial interest. Is this not a matter of Imperial interest? The right hon. Gentleman repeatedly taunted my friends with being guided by sentiment and morality. Yes, Sir, the British people have always been guided by sentiment and morality, and it is that fact largely which gives them their power and standing in the world. Are we to understand that that is to be given up, and a new policy is to be opened for this country? The right hon. Gentleman says you cannot interfere when you give self-government to a Colony. Here is what the late Colonial Secretary wrote when he was addressing Lord Selborne and sending out his proposal, not for full responsible, but for representative government—

> "His Majesty's Government have been unable, having regard to the terms of peace signed in 1902, to make provision for any of his Majesty's coloured subjects. As a protection for the interests of these sections of the population which are not directly represented in the Legislature, the Governor will, as now, be required by his instruction to reserve any Bill

> whatever whereby persons not of European birth or descent may be subjected to any disability or restriction to which persons of European blood and descent are not subjected."

That is the instruction given to the Governor with regard to a representative system of government. It equally applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to a responsible government. You cannot wash your hands of your responsibility altogether. Self-government means that communities are set up which have full powers of representation. But have the Kaffirs and the Chinese those powers ? No, Sir, they have no means of making representations. They have no *status*. That is why an Imperial officer is placed in charge of natives even in a Colony like Natal; and that is why those powers must be always preserved, that we may see that these men who are *in statu pupillari* are treated with ordinary justice and consideration. That is the plain policy of the Government. I do not see anything dark about it; and in those circumstances, what good would a Royal Commission do ? It would have to inquire into two things—into the economic value of Chinese labour and into the moral aspect of it. As my hon. friend the Under-Secretary pointed out, how could the same men be competent to inquire into the two things ? [Cries of "Why not ?"] Engineers and experts would be required to inquire into the technical part of the question; and moral experts or men accustomed to consider the interests of morality would be required to inquire into the moral part of the question. The two things are inconsistent. No, Sir, on that we can judge for ourselves; and although the economic question is an interesting one, yet the inquiry would take a long time and would probably not be finished until responsible government was established in the country. I think it would be an unnecessary thing to enter upon that inquiry; but I can well imagine that the right hon. Member for Birmingham is anxious for it. Did he not tell the people of this country that they were engaged in a miners' war ? Did he not promise, not only equal rights to all white men, but especially proclaim that it was a miners' war on which the miners' prospects of occupation and livelihood depended ? I can imagine how it would be an interesting thing for him to inquire how it is that none of his prophecies have been fulfilled. He and his friends are now wondering whether or not the Chinese should be admitted in larger numbers still or whether it would be possible to ransack the country to find a few unemployed Kaffirs. It may be interesting for him to inquire into that question; but it is one that we at least can well leave to the Government of the Transvaal itself.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 378; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 22.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richards
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonpt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshre
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N. E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clough, W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.

Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir W. J. (S.PancrasW.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C.H. (Sussex, E.Grinst.
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin,Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St. Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan,C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt, Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.

Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W. Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshre
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lutterell, Hugh Courtenay
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.

MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G.Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick, A.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts. Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor. James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Philipps,Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk, E.
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan

Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt Hn E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, SirG Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allesbrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southam'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson A. (Elgin and Nairn
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord(Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, SirJT (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—
Mr. George Whiteley and
Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, RtHn A.J. (CityLond.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H M. (DublinUniv.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James(Down, E.
Cross, Alexander
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir FredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, Sir W. Evans(T'r Ham
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F(Bury S. Edm'ds.
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour(Hull
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Farehm
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Nield, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert(Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Renton, Major Leslie
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Rt. Hn J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Lord Balcarres.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) pointed out that this was a Bill which provided that the pension of a policeman should be forfeited if a testimonial was got up on behalf of the policeman on his leaving the force. That seemed to him to be a doubtful remedy for the evils complained of, and he thought the House should have some further explanation with regard to it.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that that was only in the case of a testimonial being improperly got up. Cases unfortunately occurred of an inspector on leaving the force going round the districts over which he had had control and to solicit the publicans in the district to subscribe to a testimonial for him.

LORD R. CECIL thought that the provisions of the Bill were much more general than that.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) said he thought there should be more time given to the discussion of this Bill.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: It has been discussed. It is your own Bill.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE said he was in a state of ignorance with regard to the provisions of the Bill, although he was supposed to be a supporter of it.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

One other Member took and subscribed the Oath.

SOUTH AFRICA (HIGH COMMISSIONER).

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) rose to move, "That this House expresses its disapproval of the conduct of Lord Milner, as High Commissioner of South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal, in authorising the flogging of Chinese labourers in breach of the law, in violation of treaty obligations, and without the knowledge or sanction of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies." He said that the fortune of the ballot had cast upon him a task which would have been, perhaps, better discharged by others, and while he would not shrink from the responsibilty placed upon him, he wished at the outset to disclaim all personal hostility to Lord Milner. *The Times* newspaper and a great many other newspapers and large numbers of anonymous correspondents had thought fit to accuse him for bringing forward this Motion of all sorts of motives, of petty spite, of black ingratitude, of sordid lust for Party gain. All this was very absurd. He had no vindictive spirit against Lord Milner. It was not so much of Lord Milner that he was thinking. It was the honour of the country that he was jealous for, it was the good faith and the self-respect of this House, it was that when the people of this country questioned the King's Ministers they should be able to rely upon assurances given by them. If the country was deceived, if illegality was condoned, if high officials were screened, and if injustice and cruelty were allowed to go unreproved, then in his judgment the highest interests of this country were in danger. In a memorable debate in this House, many years ago, on the subject of the high-handed action of a great administrator in South Africa, the right hon Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking of Sir Bartle Frere, whom he styled "a self-willed politician," said—

> "This new Imperialism of the Government had affected the minds and judgments of those to whom were necessarily delegated the

powers and authority of this country in distant lands. Unless this spirit were—either by Parliament or by the people—sternly and severely repressed, there could hardly be a limit to the difficulties, and even disasters, yet in store for this country."

What the right hon Gentleman said then he (Mr. Byles) said now. So much for the motive with which he brought forward this Resolution. He was concerned with the office of High Commissioner and with Lord Milner only as the holder of that office. If for no other reason, certain pleasant relations he had had with Lord Milner in days past would preclude any malice on his part. Further than that, he recognised Lord Milner as an eminent public servant; he did not forget the services Lord Milner had rendered to the country while he was at the Inland Revenue, when he gave such real and valuable assistance to the late Sir William Harcourt in the revolutionary Finance Bill of 1894; neither could he nor any Member of the House forget the work which Lord Milner had done in the reorganisation of Egypt and Egyptian finance. While he admitted that the services of Lord Milner at the Inland Revenue and in Egypt were deserving of the gratitude of the country —services which were marked and crowned with conspicuous success — he could not help thinking that his administration in South Africa had been an equally conspicuous failure. This Motion invited the House to express its disapproval of Lord Milner for sanctioning the flogging of Chinese labourers. The facts of the case were very simple. Lord Milner was approached by the mineowners who, after the war were unable to obtain sufficient native labour, and who asked him to allow them to import Asiatic labour. Lord Milner agreed, and the famous Ordinance was passed, solemn engagements were entered into between this country and the Chinese Empire, that the Chinese coolies brought over to the Rand should not be flogged except by order of the Court. Lord Milner, as High Commissioner of this country, broke that engagement deliberately and intentionally, and purposely withheld the knowledge of the decision to which he had come from the Government which he served.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, no. Perhaps I may be permitted. I merely wish to know what it is the hon. Gentleman brings as a charge against Lord Milner. Does he mean to say, as he has just now said, that Lord Milner's action in those matters was taken deliberately, and that he purposely withheld the facts from the Government? The words used by the hon. Member were "deliberately" and "purposely."

*MR. BYLES said he certainly understood from Lord Milner's speech in the House of Lords the other night that he had done this knowingly, intentionally, and deliberately; he certainly did not desire to accuse Lord Milner of anything he did not wish to say, but that was what he understood him to say. At any rate Lord Milner quite frankly confessed so much in the House of Lords and very properly expressed his regret for it. In other words Lord Milner disapproved of his own conduct, and all that the Motion asked the House to do was to disapprove of it too. The speech in which Lord Milner made this confession was one of great interest from many points of view. It was his maiden speech, and in it he admitted quite frankly that he was responsible for the introduction of Chinese labour into the mines. At first he said he was as much opposed to it as all the rest of the white population of the Transvaal, except a handful of miners, and then he stated by what insidious manner he was converted. He said that white men could do the work, but not so cheaply. That was a most interesting point, because the House had been told thousands of times that white men could not do the work. Now they knew from Lord Milner that they could. He (Mr. Byles) had always said that the whole object of this Chinese labour was to get cheap labour, to get wages down and dividends up. Lord Milner further said that to the white man with his ideas such labour would mean degradation, and he (Mr. Byles) must admit he did not know a British working man who would submit to be flogged in the mines. But, said Lord Milner, it was "almost providential" when the Chinaman came along. Lord Milner was converted, and the Chinese came; they were beaten cruelly, and they complained. At length their complaints had reached this House. Questions were asked as to the truth of this flogging and whether it had taken place, and the Answer was no. But it had taken place, as they now knew, and it was sanctioned by Lord Milner Had it not been for Lord Milner's conversion we should not have had Chinese labour. The Chinese were brought because they were degraded creatures and would not mind being flogged. That was the only natural conclusion that could be drawn from the speech of Lord Milner. This state of things was justified on the principle that "the end justifies the means." The end was cheapness, the means were servile labour. It might be cheap and nasty, but it must be cheap. The fallacy lay in supposing that the prosperity of the Transvaal depended on gold-bearing quartz. Yet the people there were never so happy as they were before the gold was discovered, and, in his opinion, they would never be so happy again until the gold was all worked out, and the vultures which had fastened on it had taken flight. In the last generation this country had become far more humane, and men were beginning to see the stupidity as well as the brutality of flogging. These Chinese labourers had been called "animated machines." Suppose they were not "animated," the last thing anyone would do would be to beat them. When their bearings got hot, oil would be poured on them. But because they were men—of far more complex and delicate organisation than machines made of iron—the people of South Africa proceeded to knock them about in the manner described in Mr. Boland's letter. That was the kind of flogging that had been going on with the sanction of Lord Milner, although China had got the assurance, and relied on British honour for its fulfilment, that there should be no flogging without the sanction of the courts. Supposing an Admiral of the Fleet came to the First Lord of the Admiralty and said he could not maintain discipline on his ship unless he flogged the men, and supposing the First Lord of the Admiralty said, "all right, go on, but don't say anything about it," that would be a parallel case.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No it would not.

*MR. BYLES: There was once a philosopher who said you can do anything so long as you say nothing.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Lord Milner did not say that.

Mr. Byles.

*MR. BYLES: No, he was not the philosopher in question. When this Ordinance was passed the Chinese Ambassador stipulated that there should be no flogging except under the law, and he relied on British honour to see that that stipulation was carried out. Whoever was subject to the law was entitled to the protection of the law. The facts with regard to this case were not disputed, for the defendant had pleaded guilty. The Lord Chancellor, an illustrious Member of the Cabinet, and the highest judicial authority in the land, had said in the House of Lords

> "It was a flagrant illegality; it was illegal and Lord Milner knew it."

In these circumstances he was surprised that the Government did not see their way to accept his Motion. How came we to annex the Transvaal at all? Was it not alleged, at any rate, that it was because President Kruger could not enforce the law. Whenever the grievances of the Uitlanders were paraded before them, was it not always the miscarriage of justice that was the chief indictment? It was because the liberties of our people were not safe in the hands of President Kruger that we fought him and took his country from him. Lord Milner's own despatches in 1899 constantly laid stress on these things. It was not for the sake of the Chinese only that this Motion was brought forward. It concerned quite as much our relations with the Boers, and indeed with all races of non-British people in the King's Dominions. A new constitution was about to be given to the Transvaal, and the first thing to establish was absolute confidence in the administration of the law. The Boers were reputed to be a suspicious people. What would become of their confidence in us when they found breaches of the law sanctioned by the highest executive officer of the State, and sanctioned moreover in the interests of the very men whom they regarded as responsible for all the evils of the war, and for the wreckage of their country? There was an Amendment on the Paper by an hon. Gentleman deprecating the stirring up of racial animosity. Racial animosity had never been stirred up by keeping officers in the straight path, but it had been stirred up more than once by screening them and covering their lapses from virtue. He need only instance the

Jameson Raid. After that event, had Dr. Jameson been punished and cashiered, President Kruger would have been perfectly satisfied, the Boers would not have been irritated, and there would have been no war. This House was the guardian of the national honour. It was also the guardian of the liberties of all the people who enjoyed the protection of our King. It was the guardian of the reputation of England for equality before the law for rich and poor, black and white and yellow. If this Resolution were rejected the offence of Lord Milner would be in a sense condoned. The humblest subject of the Empire would not be safe. Every prancing pro-consul in the Empire would be encouraged to play off his own bat, and pay regard not to the law but to his own sweet will. The Government had put down an Amendment to this Motion, and though in the main it agreed with this Motion it did not go quite so far. It was inmaterial to him in a sense into which lobby Members chose to go. The Motion and the Amendment both condemned the illegal flogging, but those who voted for this Motion desired to put on the journals of the House their express disapproval of that flogging. There was no essential difference between them. He would not be opposing the Government when he called for a division against their Amendment, nor would they be opposing him. If he thought there would be absolute unanimity in the House upon the Government Amendment he would withdraw his Resolution in order that there might be a unanimous vote. But he had reason to believe that that would not be the case under any circumstances, and therefore he should press this Motion to a division, and he hoped that a large number of Members would be undeterred by the great station and influence of Lord Milner from voting with him on the Motion he now moved.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury) said he rose to second this Motion, but before doing so he must plead for that kindly indulgence which he believed was always extended to a Member who addressed the House for the first time. He was sure his hon. friend who brought forward this Motion, and they who were supporting him, would not be doing so unless they believed there were great questions at issue in this matter—questions which could not be ignored by this House without abdicating some of its most important functions and neglecting a clear duty. The House had known for some time that a high official of the Crown had so far mistaken his position as to permit systematic breaches of the law to be kept for many months from the knowledge of the Secretary of State, to whom he was bound to be frank to the utmost degree. Could any self-respecting government or legislature allow such conduct on the part of one of its servants to pass without rebuke? If any subordinate officer had committed the same breach of duty, would he have been allowed to go unpunished? Everybody must know that it would not have been the case. Why then should it be allowed to pass because the person implicated happened to occupy the very highest position that any subject could occupy in a great dependency? It might be said that Lord Milner no longer occupied that position. But Lord Milner resigned his position amid the plaudits of the hon. Members of the Party who supported him, and who were now on the Opposition side of the House, and the last thing that was said of him was an elaborate eulogy by the late Prime Minister. If anybody looking back on the records of this country should ask what the House of Commons thought of Lord Milner it would find nothing at all to condemn him except the reply given a few days ago by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, in answer to a Question, when he said Lord Milner had been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty.† The Resolution his hon. friend had moved appeared to him to be no more than an elaboration of the judgment then passed by the Under-Secretary. Therefore he thought they had a right to appeal to every supporter of the Government, at any rate, to support the Resolution of his hon. friend. He confessed that he did not quite understand the Amendment which had been put on the paper in the name of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. The head of the Amendment was quite in accordance with the Resolution, but the tail of it, though couched in a truely Christian spirit, seemed to him to want that sting which every tail ought to have. As the mover had said they were not so much bringing a charge against an individual as passing sentence upon a series of admitted facts, which the more they were examined into the more serious became. They had led to persistent breaches of the law in regard to a matter about which Lord Milner knew the late Government were peculiarly sensitive. He referred to the flogging of natives. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had always strongly opposed the flogging of natives. The despaches sent by the right hon. Gentleman in 1901–2 shewed that he had repeatedly instructed Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner to eliminate from the law of the Transvaal the flogging of natives. Then in 1904 in the negotiations which took place between the British Government and the Chinese Government before the Ordinance was passed, the Chinese Government insisted that in no case should it be allowable for an employer or his servant to inflict corporal punishment on the immigrant, and that violations of this prohibition should be punished at law as common assults. Lord Milner said there would be no difficulty in including that in the Ordinance, and also pointed out that the Chinese, like everybody else, would have the protection of the law, that flogging could not be inflicted except by the order of a magistrate, confirmed by a Judge. There was the clear assurance, given on the faith of the High Commissioner of South Africa, to the ambassador of a foreign Power, that in no circumstances should flogging be administered to a Chinese coolie except in accordance with the law of the land. What followed upon that? The Convention was passed providing that every Chinese coolie should have the same right of redress in the Courts of Justice in the Transvaal as subjects of all other races had. From March down to the end of July last year repeated assurances were given by Mr. Lyttelton that no flogging was taking place outside the Law Courts. Assurances were given in this House and in another place, and the actual number of persons flogged was mentioned, namely, six. The last assurance was given, he believed, by Mr. Lyttelton on the 27th July, to the effect that, so far as he knew, the law was being observed in the Transvaal with regard to this matter.[†] At the time that the House was being thus lulled into false security Lord Milner had left South Africa and was travelling slowly about Europe, finally reaching this country in July. On the day Mr. Lyttelton gave his last assurance, Lord Milner was admitted to Parliament, so that it was impossible to argue that he could not have been aware of what was going on in Parliament. He must have known what was going on in Parliament, and yet he allowed the Government, to whom he ought to have acted with loyalty and good faith, constantly to represent a false state of things to the House. Since Parliament rose in August last year the country remained under the belief that flogging was not being illegally carried on, though great uneasiness was felt owing to constant stories coming from South Africa. It was not until December that a Blue-book appeared in which it was stated for the first time that Mr. Lyttelton had found out that a totally different state of things had been going on, and that the High Commissioner had sanctioned the taking of the law out of the hands of the magistrates of the Colony and its being put into the hands of the mine managers. Mr. Lyttelton said he had no idea of this until Lord Selborne told him of it in October, and nobody who knew Mr. Lyttelton would doubt for a moment that what he said was true. Therefore, if there were no other reason for passing condemnation upon a high official, the fact that he had deliberately allowed his superiors to remain under a false impression in regard to so important a matter was a sufficient ground for condemnation. Great abuses had followed on the flogging. There had been other forms of torture inflicted upon these Chinamen which Lord Milner might not have known about, but for which it was impossible not to hold him responsible. In spite of the injunctions, first of Mr. Lyttelton and then of Lord Elgin, that prosecutions should take place against offenders, not a single prosecution had been instituted. The reason of that, he suggested, was that the persons who would be the chief witnesses were the Chinese themselves, and they were under such a state of intimidation that it was quite impossible for them to give evidence. According to the last Blue-book the Chinese, when called before the Commission of Inquiry ordered by Lord Selborne, were not allowed to give evidence before the Commission except on their knees—a form of proceedings which was calculated to frighten them from giving reliable evidence. The consequences of the illegal treatment of the Chinese did not stop there. The Chinamen were driven into a state of desperation by the treatment they received; they deserted from the mines, and, being forbidden by law from obtaining an honest livelihood, they were driven to commit crimes, and so the unfortunate people of the Transvaal, who had only just recovered from a devastating war, had inflicted upon them the calamity of having their houses broken into, their property taken, and often murders committed by the Chinese. The Attorney-General of the Transvaal, speaking in the Legislative Council in September, stated that up to that time there had been 2,543 convictions, 735 desertions, and 21,205 cases of refusal to work, out of a total of 46,000 Chinamen in the country. Every kind of serious crime was recorded against the Chinamen in the last Blue-book. In one case an unfortunate Dutch farmer was murdered before the eyes of his wife and child, who were both badly injured, and for that crime alone four Chinamen were hanged. At whose door lay the responsibility for this? Then in order to cope with this very serious state of things, a law had been passed which was worse than the first Ordinance, as it was passed for the express purpose of further restricting the liberty of the Chinese, and took away from them even the right of having their offences investigated by the magistrates of the Colony, and set up domestic tribunals, presided over by persons who were not lawyers, to try them under the eyes of the compound managers. What were called collective fines were levied. In the event of a Chinaman not being able to pay the fine inflicted, the gang with whom he worked had to make it up. Anything less consistent with justice, as it was understood in this country, he could not imagine. Perhaps the most sinister part of the whole business was the part played by the Chamber of Mines. It seemed that it was into their hands that the administration of the law was resigned by the high officers of the Crown; and when at last the flogging was stopped, as was said, in June last, it was by a circular of the Chamber of Mines, issued on the 16th June. It was sometimes asserted that Lord Milner's Government was conducted for and by the mineowners. When they found the law taken out of the hands of official persons, and allowed to be administered by the Chamber of Mines, there was very good grounds for the assertion. He hoped the House to-night would make it clear that the state of things that had been revealed would not be allowed to continue, and that when it discovered that one of its servants, however highly placed, had misused his powers, it would interfere with authority to vindicate those principles of freedom, humanity, and justice which were, after all, the most priceless possession of their race.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1238.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cl., 688, *et seq.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House expresses its disapproval of the conduct of Lord Milner, as High Commissioner of South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal, in authorising the flogging of Chinese labourers in breach of the Law, in violation of treaty obligations, and without the knowledge or sanction of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."—(*Mr. Byles.*)

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, I can hardly think, Sir, of any task more distasteful to a generous mind than that which has been voluntarily undertaken to-night by the two hon. Gentlemen who have preceded me. Of course I accept their own statements that they were animated by the highest and, I will add, a very exceptional sense of public duty. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Stafford—[Cries of "Salford"]—the hon. Member for North Salford—[AN HON. MEMBER: Do not forget Manchester.] I beg hon. Gentlemen to consider the dignity of the House of Commons. [OPPOSITION cries of "Manners."] I think the hon. Member for North Salford will admit a reluctance in pursuing the duty which he thought had been cast upon him. He said he had no feeling of malignity towards Lord Milner, that he was only impressed by the necessity of vindicating his country's honour. Well, Sir, let me say at once that I believe in the hon. Gentleman's sincerity; but it is a very dangerous thing when private individuals upon whom no great responsibility is cast undertake so great a matter as that of vindicating their country's honour. Sir, I accept the hon. Gentleman's statement absolutely as to his own motives and intentions. I cannot do otherwise; for if, instead of being inspired by these high intentions he had been animated by Party contentions, by what is worse still, by personal and petty spite—if that had been the cause, what could be meaner, what could be more contemptible in any Member of this House than to persecute a great servant of the public, a great official who, in the words of Lord Elgin the other day, the generous words of Lord Elgin, was—

> "One who, during a time of stress and anxiety showed a courage and devotion to his country that his country will not forget."

What, I say, could be more despicable than to attack such a man without the sanction of the highest motive, which the hon. Gentleman claimed for himself, and to persecute him for a single error of judgment—[MINISTERIAL Cries of "No, no!"]—a single error of judgment—in a long course of public service? "No, no," you say. Then for what do you persecute him? [AN HON. MEMBER: Flogging.] The Motion is confined to a single act in a long public life, in a long course of public service. I am not permitted by the rules of the House to go beyond the Resolution, and I am bound to say that the two hon. Gentlemen who have spoken have confined themselves very strictly to this narrow ground; and for a single error of judgment, upon this single point, they ask the House to inflict this humiliation on a most distinguished member of our great Civil Service. What is the proposal? In the absence, the necessary absence, of the person accused—for you have not called him to the Bar of this House—you propose to call on the House to pass a Resolution which can have no practical effect, and to inflict censure and humiliation on this man, of whose existence and work in our history, at any rate, if not, indeed, in this conflict of petty passion, in history, at all events, the people of this country will be proud. You ask the House to pass this censure on a man who is no longer in office and for an error which you admit you know he has frankly acknowledged, and for which he has expressed regret. Where is the generosity? Where is the magnanimity for which we take credit when you can put aside all that you owe to this great and distinguished public servant in order to condemn him, and to inflict this unnecessary humiliation on him after he has himself acknowledged and regretted the error he has committed? The Resolution is retrospective. It is vindictive. Sir, let us have no cant about this matter. We all know, the country knows, that the object of this Motion is to inflict humiliation upon a person who is as honest and as sincere as any Member of this House, but of whose policy hon. Members opposite happen to disapprove; and for that and for Party reasons they pick up a single point in a long history of self-sacrifice and devotion. They pick it up because they have an admission—I am almost disposed to say an unnecessary admission—at all events it is a chivalrous admission — of the person concerned. They dare not question his policy as a whole [Cries of "Oh"], and they pick up the one point, the one little point, a comparatively unimportant point in the whole history of this great man's life. They pick it up because they have his own admission and they cannot be contradicted; and they, accepting his regret, are not satisfied without the additional humiliation which they think they can inflict by a vote of this House, but which will recoil upon the heads of those who have proposed it, and upon those who may be ungenerous enough to support it. Now, Sir, what are the facts? ["Hear, hear."] Yes; I do not wonder hon. Members opposite wish to hear them after the statement that has been made. I know, for I have had a long acquaintance with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Salford, and I do believe in my heart that he is thoroughly sincere—he means to be accurate—that he would not knowingly impute to even his bitterest opponent anything which ought not to be imputed; but I never heard in my life a statement in which there was more perversion of the true state of the case than the statement we have just heard from the hon Gentleman. He puts in adjectives without apparently any understanding of their importance. He actually declared in this House, when it was not so full as it is at present, that Lord Milner had admitted that he had deliberately broken an engagement undertaken with a foreign nation, and that he had purposely withheld the knowledge of the facts from his Government.

MR. BYLES: I said I understood Lord Milner's own words in the House of Lords to mean that. That is my clear understanding of them. They are not adjectives, but that does not matter. [" Shame."]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Order! order! I was put out for saying " Shame " once.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I hate to hear this laughter, whether in my favour or against me. The honour of the public service of the country is at stake. I did not laugh at or interrupt the hon. Gentleman. I most deeply regret the statement he was persuaded to make, and I am going to treat this question seriously in answer to the hon. Gentleman. He understood that to be what Lord Milner meant. But, Sir, he cannot understand English. I am not going to read the whole of the speech, although it is a short one, in which Lord Milner acknowledged his part in this matter with a frankness which every impartial, honourable man will admire, and never, never in the whole course of this controversy has he admitted, or is it possible to suppose, that he purposely deceived the Government which he was serving, that he deliberately did this, that, or the other. In that case, for Heaven's sake, why are not hon. Members consistent?

MR. BYLES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that this was an accident or was it deliberately sanctioned. That was what he wanted to know. He understood Lord Milner to say that he sanctioned the flogging. He made no objection to what Mr. Evans told him he had done. Therefore he took it that it was purposeful, intentional, and deliberate.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: To my mind, and I will give my reasons for it, certainly nothing was less purposeful and deliberate; and again I say I cannot believe the hon. Gentleman in his sober [Laughter]—his serious moments—I am sorry that there should be this disposition to seize upon any possible slip which, in my anxiety to do justice to the subject, I may make—I say I cannot believe the hon. Gentleman in his serious moments can believe that Lord Milner, a great public servant, with whom he says he has been in personal communication, could have deliberately done so outrageous a thing as purposely to deceive his Parliamentary chiefs, and deliberately to do a great wrong which he had subsequently regretted; and I say if that were true hon. Members ought to be consistent. They ought to understand that a charge of that kind cannot be met by the mere censure of the House. It is the most serious thing in the world; and nothing short of an impeachment would justify a charge of that kind. Now let me, at any rate, proceed to give my own version of the facts, as I understand them. Let anyone contradict them afterwards if he thinks I have misunderstood them. When the late Government undertook to sanction the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa they were guided by what had been done in regard to the employment of foreign labour in other colonies, and they nominated an official as protector of the Chinese, and the duty of this protector was to see that the contract entered into was understood by the labourer, that it was completely carried out, that the coolie was treated with humanity, and that his health, comfort, and general welfare were properly looked after. This was the duty of the official, a duty well known and performed in Mauritius, in the Malay Settlements, in the West Indies, and now in the Transvaal. For this purpose the Government nominated—I am not sure if the appointment was made by the home Government—Mr. Evans, a gentleman who had a most honourable record of, I think, twenty years in the Malay States, who had a high reputation for ability, for integrity, and humanity, who knew the Chinese language, and had been in constant communication with Chinamen in the Malay Straits. I doubt myself whether a better appointment could have been suggested. Now this is the authority for any statement of fact that can be presented to the House, and Mr. Evans himself stated to Mr. Lyttelton that on a definite occasion, in the course of a general conversation, in which, no doubt, many other subjects were dealt with, he had, casually, as it were, told Lord Milner that he had found it necessary to give permission for a certain limited amount of corporal punishment to be inflicted in the mines, and he stated —I forget whether he gave the explanation to Lord Milner—he stated to Mr. Lyttelton that he had done that because in the case of certain offences against discipline he had found that the delay, the necessary delay, in taking the case to the courts and so on, led to serious difficulty and that a trivial matter easily became a serious riot. It was in his opinion necessary that greater discretion should be given to a manager in the case of really trivial offences. That is Mr. Evans's statement, and for the moment I am only repeating it. It is not his statement that Lord Milner carefully and deliberately considered the matter, and there is no record whatever of this taking place. If it took place at all it took place in this casual way in the course of a conversation on many subjects, and Mr. Evans says that Lord Milner took no objection. [" Hear, hear," " He ought to have done so."] Ah, yes, if we were perfect how many are the things we might have done or done better. Lord Milner says, and no doubt everyone will believe his statement, that he has absolutely no recollection of this conversation, but he has no reason whatever to doubt Mr. Evans' integrity or his memory, and therefore he has taken on himself to accept his statement as accurate. I am therefore debarred from going in any particular behind the statement of Mr. Evans. Lord Milner says he has no doubt the conversation took place as Mr. Evans stated, and now he has only to say, " I think I was wrong in not taking notice of this statement; I regret that I did not do so." [" Hear, hear."] Here we are all agreed, that this original permission which Mr. Evans says he reported to Lord Milner was illegal. The hon. Member for Newbury has been kind enough to give me credit for sincerity in my objections to flogging, and therefore he will not be surprised that I say I deeply regret that any official in the colonial or public service should have given this illegal permission which was given by Mr. Evans. I go beyond, and, accepting Lord Milner's statement say also it is very much to be regretted that he failed to notice it, for that is the only charge that is brought against him. Mr. Evans only says, " He took no objection." I very much regret he took no objection, and that in the conversation which passed he did not at once say " No; I cannot listen to anything of the kind." But I also think, in common fairness to Lord Milner, that he was likely to be much less on his guard against a gentleman who was protector of the Chinese, and who, let me say, had been earnest and energetic on all other occasions in protecting the Chinese and was constantly representing their wrongs and grievances, and endeavouring to secure a redress of them. Really, in common fairness, we must admit that Lord Milner would be less on his guard against an evil coming from the protector of the Chinese than he would have been against it coming from any one else. Very shortly after this, and after Lord Milner had left, abuses and outrages on the Chinese were reported to Sir Arthur Lawley, and promptly dealt with by him; he withdrew any permission given, and refused to allow any sort of illegal punishment. May I further remind the House that Mr. Lyttelton, in his position as Secretary of State for the Colonies, the moment the matter was brought to his knowledge, expressed in severe terms his disapproval and his profound regret that anything of the kind had taken place? Now we all regret, Lord Milner himself included, that this incident occurred; and could it not now be allowed to rest? Surely, after such an expression of opinion as appears in the Blue-books by his official superiors, was not that sufficient to vindicate the honour of the country which the hon. Member for North Salford had taken under his special care? It seems to me we ought to be satisfied. When the Motion was put down on the Paper by a private Member naturally my great interest was to know the view the Government were going to take. Did they think the circumstances demanded the censure of a great public servant? I hoped that they would take a very broad view of the situation, and that we might find ourselves in absolute agreement. But an Amendment has been put on the Paper. At an earlier part of the day I think the Under-Secretary for the Colonies complained that I had not been able to give him notice of an Amendment I moved. We have not had much notice. I have much more reason to complain of the action of the Government.

Mr. CHURCHILL: I did not complain of that.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not complain in the least. I say we have only had short notice of this Amendment. Although the hon. Member's Resolution has been on the Paper for a long time, it was only this morning that we learned the particular way in which the Government propose to deal with it. They have put down an Amendment. Sir, it is a cowardly Amendment. I would prefer infinitely the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman. At all events that presents a clear issue. I should vote against it with a light heart, but I should vote against it with some respect for the hon. Gentleman who, with, I think, a mistaken impression of his duty, has put it down in clear terms. But the Amendment! It is an Amendment which insults Lord Milner, and at the same time accepts the substantial part of the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman opposite. They think to gain votes by distinctly pointing at Lord Milner, and at the same time withdrawing his name. That is Party tactics; Liberal policy. Well, I must refrain. But there is something else. What is this "conciliatory" Amendment to do? It is proposed in the interests of "peace and conciliation." It is an Amendment which a politician may accept, but which on its merits would be rejected by every honourable man. This Amendment is entrusted to the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary for the Colonies. What is the history—I am speaking of recent events—of the connection of the hon. Gentleman with this matter? The other day he was asked a question on this matter, and from that almost sacrosanct position which he now occupies he described this action of the High Commissioner's as a grave dereliction of public duty. Brave words! [Ministerial cheers.] You agree? [Cries of "Entirely," and "Yes."] Why, do not you see that these brave words have very weak conclusions? There is a man in the very highest position in the public service. He has been guilty in your minds and in the minds of the Government of a grave dereliction of duty, and you are going to be satisfied with an empty Resolution which, if you succeed in passing it, will be treated with contempt by everyone who has the honour to appreciate the services of Lord Milner. You cannot condemn him in terms of this kind without admittedly laying yourselves open to the charge that you do not believe what you say, for if you do believe it you would impeach him.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I will vote for it if you will move it.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I see hon. Gentlemen below the gangway appreciate the force of my argument. They would impeach him. They have the right to do it. They would repeat the experiment in the case of Warren Hastings at Heaven knows what cost to the country. They would have a great State trial occupying many years. It would end in a verdict of complete acquittal, and probably a subsequent Parliament would pass a most effusive Resolution of gratitude and respect to the person whom they had impeached. I appreciate all that; it is consistent. What I complain of is the policy of the Government. Once more it is what it has been over and over again this session, a policy of contemptible weakness. Those who take this extreme view dare not carry their policy to its logical conclusion. The hon. Gentleman who said Lord Milner had been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty said another thing which astonished me, and is quite new in official procedure. He said Lord Milner had made a Party speech in another place, and that relieved him of any obligation whatever to defend him.† Well, I do not think Lord Milner has lost much. But what a statement! The obligation by honourable and long tradition of great offices to defend any public servant who cannot defend himself. [Cries of "Butler" and "Macdonald."] The obligation to defend any public servant against unjust or excessive censure is an obligation independent altogether of all Party considerations. I deny altogether that the speech made by Lord Milner could, by an impartial person, be considered in any possible sense a Party speech. It was a speech made without any attempt to put pressure on the Government. It accepted the plea of the Government that they must have time to form their conclusions, and it put before the Government what they should be glad to have known—the opinion of a man of great experience and great knowledge upon the subject on which they have to pronounce. To call that a Party speech is a misuse of terms. But, even if it had been a Party speech, I will say that the hon. Gentleman cannot, without a great breach of tradition, absolve himself from that honourable necessity placed upon a political chief to say all that can be said in favour of those who serve the Department with which he is concerned.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1236.

Mr. CHURCHILL: It is not so.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It matters very little to such a man—to a man who entertains that view of his own obligations and of Lord Milner's services. I think it is regrettable that, on the present occasion, the representation of the Government should be committed to his hands. I say it is the duty of the head of a Department, whoever he may be, to defend the servants of the Department.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Not for reprehensible conduct.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I say it is the duty of the head of the Department to defend the servants of the Crown against unjust censure. I ask this question—Is it just to censure a public servant who has given eight years, the best years, probably, of his life to the service of his country—is it just to condemn him because he has confessed to an error of judgment on a single occasion? Anyway, that is a new idea of official responsibility. [Cries of "No."] Many years ago—I believe it was in the early fifties—there was a Liberal public servant, a diplomatist of great distinction, Sir James Hudson, who was our Minister at Turin, and who made a statement which was held to be, I think by many Liberals, certainly by the Tory Government then in power, of the highest indiscretion, a great mistake of judgment. Attention was called to it in this House, and it fell to Mr. Disraeli, who was then leading the House, to express the opinion of the Government on the subject. He refused to condemn Sir James Hudson, and this is what he said—

> "Great services are not cancelled by one act, by one single error, however it may be regretted at the moment."

And, therefore, although Sir James Hudson was a political opponent and was known to be a strong adherent of the Liberal cause, Mr. Disraeli in those old days—we are much superior now—had the generosity to defend his political opponent for the reason I have given. Is there not even more reason in the case of Lord Milner? Will the House allow me to try and bring before them the nature of the work which is imposed upon High Commissioners, Viceroys, and Governors of Crown Colonies throughout the Empire? These men are in a way autocrats, and that brings upon them all the disadvantages which autocrats have to suffer. They are responsible for everything, be it great or be it small, in the administration with which they are connected. They are answerable for the security of the possessions for which they are made responsible. They are answerable for order, for legislation, for every detail of administration, for every act, be it great or small, of every member, be he important or otherwise, of the whole administration. For all these things these men are, technically, at any rate, responsible to their Departments and to this House of Commons. They are not infallible. How can you expect to get infallible administrators under such circumstances? I do not believe they are to be found anywhere, but certainly you do not offer much temptation. I have never heard of any one in the colonial service who in these trying positions, having to submit, as he has to do, to this sort of ignorant and irresponsible criticism on the part of people who have none of his responsibility, has become a gold magnate, who has made a fortune, who has even been able to provide for those whom he has left behind him, by devotion to the public service, by his interest in the great work he is conducting from the highest motives. These men, some of them never rising to a great position, others occupying positions of the greatest responsibility, have continued to serve the country, and now you are placing a slight on the whole service in the person of one of its most distinguished representatives—Lord Milner. It is admitted that before he occupied his position in South Africa Lord Milner had done great service to the State—and that is to be considered—he had done great service to the Party opposite. But I put that aside. His great service to the country are his services in South Africa. During a great part of that time he was in a sense responsible to me, and as my colleague and friend a greater man I have never known. I have never known even a great man who did not make mistakes. This man has given his life, he has risked his health, he has lived under conditions which very few in this House would be willing to sustain. Eight hours a day! Why eighteen hours a day of continuous brain work very often fell to his lot. He has had to deal with the Administration in the Cape Colony under great stress and anxiety, in the Transvaal under circumstances of still greater difficulty, and during the whole of that time he has shown an ability, courage, and firmness that ought to commend itself to men who appreciate bravery at a time when his life might have been so much easier if he had shown weakness. Hon. Members opposite may not agree with him, but I appeal with confidence to them to admire the character which he showed in difficult circumstances. And if they disagree with him for that, they cannot condemn him. His policy was my policy as long as I was in the Office. It was Mr. Lyttelton's policy when he succeeded me. They ought not to blame him. We were satisfied with all that he did and we take the reponsibility for every action which we have not officially condemned. It is we who ought to be the subject of their censure if they think we are deserving of it. In a debate which took place a day or two ago, I was struck by a speech delivered by Lord Stanmore. He is, I believe, a strong Liberal, and a most distinguished official. He has occupied the highest offices in many of our Crown Colonies, and he has been Governor of some of the most important possessions of the Crown. Lord Stanmore upon this matter expressed sympathy with Lord Milner. He went further. He expressed his belief that he himself and every Governor had at some time or another on their own responsibility committed the same error of violating the strict letter of the law. Well, hon. Members opposite will not stop it by absurd Resolutions of this kind. They will only stop it when they can make human nature perfect. I do not go so far as Lord Stanmore. I occupied my position for eight years and I am not aware of any violations even of the spirit of the law. But there were very few Governors in my time—and I was fortunate enough to have the most splendid public servants in that capacity—who did not at one time or another make serious mistakes. Well, I want this House to consider the subject from that intimate point of view. Here is this colonial service of ours, which is known and admired throughout the world for its absolute integrity, its freedom from corruption, its ability, its humanity. It is only by these extraordinary qualities that what I may call the daily miracle of the successful administration of the British Empire is continuously carried on. But for them, how would it be possible for these two small islands of ours to administer so large a portion of the earth's surface and with so much distinction and general satisfaction? Sir, I ask the House to put aside every other consideration but that of their Imperial duty, the duty which they cannot escape, even those who least sympathise with the work, be they Irish, Scottish, or English, and look to those great considerations and principles which have made this Colonial Service what it undoubtedly is. I ask them to recognise the merits of this service; and I ask them to appreciate the difficulties under which every member of it lies, and not to discourage them when one of them has committed a mistake which he himself has freely acknowledged. I ask them not to discourage the whole service by harsh criticism of one of its most distinguished members. I hope the House will reject this Amendment. If I may venture to advise my friends I would say that our course is clear. When the Motion is put after the Amendment of the Government has been proposed it will be in the form that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question. I shall vote against that. In so doing I am voting against the Resolution. I shall vote against the Resolution as a whole, and I shall vote against it in part; I shall vote against it in every possible way. If the Amendment is not carried then the Resolution will be put in its entirety and I shall vote against that. If the Amendment of the Government is carried and put as the substantive Motion, I shall then vote against it, as worse indeed, because it is more dishonest, than the Motion. I hope the House will treat this as a question rather outside ordinary political questions, and that it will reject both the Amendment and the Resolution. But if it does not, if it accepts either, if it is carried, in that case I shall rely upon the Parliament of the future whose advent will be quickened by this ill-treatment of one of our great officials—I rely upon the future Parliament to do what Parliaments have done in the past more than once, namely, to repair, tardily it may be, a great injustice and to expunge from our records a Resolution which, if it ever be placed there, will be a disgrace to them.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to-day for the second time to follow the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, but I hope I shall not be drawn by that association into imitating or attempting to imitate the protracted, superlative, and, I think, rather laboured exhibition of contempt with which he has occupied the attention of the House. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has heaped contempt and contumely upon my hon. friend the Member for North Salford, and upon the Motion which he has placed upon the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman has used even stronger, or, if it had been in his power, he would have used even stronger, expressions against the Amendment which I have placed on the Paper by the direction of the Prime Minister, and which enjoys the support of those who give him their sympathy and act with him. He described that Amendment as base, cowardly, and dishonest. Then, at least, I hope I may ask for a special measure of the indulgence of the House in order to say anything that may be said in support of a course which has been subjected to such very severe condemnation. I would ask the House to clear their minds of the fierce and bitter elements which the right hon. Gentleman has been the first to introduce into this discussion. I hope the House will try to give a fair consideration to the view which His Majesty's Government desire to submit for their consideration. The Motion which the hon. Member for North Salford has placed on the Paper embodies a proposition, the truth of which I venture to think very few on this side of the House would care to dispute. It has been moved with sincerity and good feeling in speeches of much ability, delivered under great restraint. But I observe that other Amendments have been placed on the Paper during the period that the Motion of the hon. Member has been set forth, and I think that, when divergent views are expressed by Members of the same Party, it would be unbecoming in the Government—and I said something like this last session—to sit silent and refuse to give any clear or direct guidance to the House. Even on a private Members' night, when a Motion of so unusual a character is brought forward, it is the duty of the Government to offer its counsel to the House. We need not lose any time in disputing about the main facts of this case. They have been forcibly repeated to us to-night. We have the admission of Lord Milner that he permitted his subordinate to authorise the illegal flogging of Chinese labourers. We know that, in consequence, flogging was inflicted on a large scale and during several months; we know that that permission was abused, as all permission to administer flogging without the restrictive regulation of the law will infallibly be abused; and we know that actual cruelty and outrage resulted. We know that this was a distinct breach of the treaty obligations which this country had contracted with a Foreign Power, and we know that all the while the

Secretary of State in this House, and the Under-Secretary in the other House, were occupied in giving Parliament assurances that nothing of the sort was going on or could possibly go on. Any one who reads the Blue-book will see the facts put forward on the authority of Lord Selborne. I have never been one of those who used the exact term of slavery in characterising the Chinese Labour Ordinance. But I say that, in face of the abuses that grew up from this wicked permission, there has arisen a state of things which makes it impossible to wonder that persons should have been carried away by honest indignation to use the strongest language of condemnation about such a system. If Gentlemen on the other side of the House have suffered from such controversial attacks, all I can say is that the responsibility which they have accepted throughout, and which even to-night they are anxious to assume, convinces me that they have received no more than they deserved. When I was asked in the course of a conversation a week ago to express an opinion on Lord Milner's share in the transaction, I said that I believed his action constituted a grave dereliction of public duty and an undoubted infringement of the law †; and that, I had thought, was the opinion of all of us. Can anyone dispute the fact that for a public officer to authorise illegal flogging is to infringe the law? Can any one deny that an infringement of the law by an officer especially charged to maintain and administer the law is a direct dereliction of public duty? Such an expression of opinion on behalf of the Minister who is for the time being charged with the duty of representing a public department was not merely legitimate but necessary. Most of all is it necessary in the case of the Colonial Office. Under the Secretary of State for the Colonies there are thirty or forty officers of high rank administering under different forms and varying conditions as many separate and distinct provinces, comprising a population of something like 30,000,000 of human beings of many races, creeds, and of almost every colour. To the Secretary of State all these important officers are responsible; and it is from the expressions which the Secretary of State, as the servant of this House, may use that these officers all over the world must be guided in the character of their administration and in the manner in which they discharge their responsibilities to all these many races over whom our authority is exercised. So far from withdrawing or minimising in any way the words which I then used on behalf of and with the assent of the Secretary of State and His Majesty's Government, I can only say that in spite of any difference of opinion entertained on the opposite side of the House, I believe these words amounted to a very fair and very reasonable and proper judgment on the transaction that has taken place. But now we are invited to take a much graver step. We are invited to place a formal censure on the journals of the House. Many hard things have been said rightly or wrongly and in different times about many persons through the mouths of Ministers of the Crown. Very few Motions of this character have ever been placed on the journals of the House. While I do not disagree in any way with the terms of the Motion as stated by my hon. friend, while I admit its truth and admire its moderation, while the Government have no intention whatever of disparaging the motives which induced the hon. Member to place it on the Paper, yet we do dispute the wisdom and the convenience of procedure which he has adopted, and we do most gravely doubt the practical utility of the step which the House is now asked to take. There are certain objections to passing this Motion in its present form which will readily occur to any one who considers the subject. In the first place the offence was committed under another Government and a different House of Commons. It is, I think, clear from what we have heard to-night that had it been brought to the notice of the other House of Commons it would have received a much more lenient consideration than it does at the hands of the new House of Commons. I admit that there is something of the flavour of retrospective retribution in a new House of Commons going back upon events which have happened under the auspices and the authority of its predecessor. Secondly, it is I think contrary to usage and to right feeling to censure a man unheard. It is true that as Lord Milner is a peer of Parliament we have no authority to bring him to our bar unless he desires to come; but this Motion does not give him the chance or the option of coming. We have, of course, Lord Milner's admissions contained in the Blue-book. We have moreover his statement and expression of regret which he made in another place†; but although these statements and admissions establish Lord Milner's acceptance of responsibility for a breach of the law, through which disastrous consequences resulted, I cannot help thinking that just-minded men, and I am sure my hon. friend, would say that before taking the serious step of placing this Resolution on the journals of the House we should examine much more closely the circumstances attending the giving of this permission, not indeed for the purposes of clearing the noble Lord concerned from the charge of having condoned wrong, or from the charge of having accepted the responsibility of wrong—for that is beyond dispute, and the right hon. Gentleman himself did not attempt to dispute it—but for the purpose of ascertaining how far really he was cognisant of what was taking place, and how far he realised to what excesses and improprieties his subordinate was committing him. I do not wish to try and put some measure of blame on Mr. Evans; but I am bound to say that after a severe examination of Mr. Evans on the subject at the Colonial Office by Mr. Lyttelton his memory appeared to be singularly unretentive on several important points. He could not remember how, where, when, and in what terms this all-important permission had been given, or how he had conveyed it to those in charge of Chinese coolies. In so far as he referred to memoranda and records his statements, so far from being confirmed, were upset. So doubtful and vague were his statements on the subject that Mr. Lyttelton thought it to be his duty to write to Lord Milner and ask whether, in view of the vagueness of Mr. Evans's statements, he could persist in his acceptance of responsibility for these transactions. Lord Milner, after careful consideration, proceeded to accept the responsibility of the statements made; and he gave an account to the House of Lords which not merely took the form of the statement that he accepted responsibility, but which purported to be almost a summary, or, at all events, a report of the conversation he had had with Mr. Evans—an account which is so far conclusive that, as the right hon. Gentleman himself has said, we cannot for a moment attempt to go behind it. I do not attempt to go behind Lord Milner's acceptance of responsiblity. It is quite impossible for us in this House to attempt to do so; and yet I say there is just that element of doubt as to his real moral responsibility for the grave circumstances of this case which I think must tend somewhat to mitigate and also somewhat to suspend the severity of our judgment. But, whether or not, I say without hesitation that it would be peculiar and unprecedented if we were, after only three hours debate, without hearing the person principally concerned, unfortified by the report of a Committee, to record our censure on the noble Lord in terms so solemn and unusual that they have only been employed, I think, twice in the last 100 years. And what about Lord Milner himself? Lord Milner's career has comprised three distinct spheres of activity — Egypt, the Treasury during the famous Death Duties Budget, and South Africa during these last eight lamentable years. With regard to the first of these fields, I suppose there would be no disposition to pass censure in any quarter of the House. With regard to the last two, various opinions are and will be held as between the great political Parties. But I do not think it can fairly be denied in any part of the House that in all these three important sets of public affairs, Lord Milner has worked, according to his lights, strenuously, faithfully, and disinterestedly. Still less can it be denied that during the long period covered by these events, he has played a part which must leave its imprint, for good or for ill, extensively upon the pages of history. I have carefully refrained from passing either censure or eulogy on all or any of these events, not because I am without opinions which at other times I may think or have thought it proper to express—I trust with sufficient clearness—but because I think it would be impossible for us to do justice to his conduct either in the one direction or the other within the compass of a three hours debate, and because I am quite certain it is impossible for the House within such a period to make even a superficial examination of such matters. I mention them for one purpose, and for one purpose alone—to submit to the House that they are very grave matters, which will be talked of for a very long time, and that they lie wholly in the past. Lord Milner has gone from South Africa, probably for ever. The public service knows him no more. Having exercised great authority he now exerts no authority. Having held high employment he now has no employment. Having disposed of events which have shaped the course of history, he is now unable to deflect in the smallest degree the policy of the day. Having been for many years, or at all events for many months, the arbiter of the fortunes of men who are "rich beyond the dreams of avarice," he is to-day poor, and I will add, honourably poor. After twenty years of exhausting service under the Crown he is to-day a retired Civil servant, without pension or gratuity of any kind whatever. [OPPOSITION cries of "Shame."] If it is a shame, there [pointing to the Front OPPOSITION Bench] is where the responsibility lies for any neglect. But I do seriously say to my hon. friend, "Is it worth while to pursue him any further?" There is—[Interruption which was unheard in the gallery]—Really, I must ask the right hon. Member for Croydon to practice a little more courtesy in his demeanour—There is another consideration to which I desire to draw the attention of the House. This new House of Commons is full of earnest, purposeful and vehement men. Let them not overlook or underrate the vexation and mortification which must be experienced by any vehement and earnest man who sees the ideals, the principles, the policies for which he has toiled utterly discredited—[OPPOSITION cries of "By whom?"]—by the people of Great Britain—and who knows that many of the arrangements in which he has consumed all the energies of his life are about to be reversed or dissolved. Lord Milner has ceased to be a factor in public events. Let my hon. friends beware that with the ever ready aid of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham he may not be recreated. Mr. Speaker, I think that great Parties should endeavour to avoid conflicts with private persons. My hon. and learned friend the Member for South Donegal, who asked me the other day whether we proposed to strike the name of Lord Milner from the Privy Council, no doubt is prepared to support that course with instances from that accurate constitutional knowledge for which he is noted. About twenty years ago there came into power a Government not indeed supported by a majority so large as that upon which we rely, but still a Government not inferior in elements of strength and stability to any other of modern times. That Government was carried away by its exultation of victory and its pride of strength to embark upon what I must call the persecution of a political opponent. The House knows well, the Irish Members particularly know well, how this mood of intolerance led that powerful Government to the Parnell Commission, to the infamous Parnell Commission, as I shall call it. And what was the result? What was the advantage which that Government reaped in the end? That great Party was covered with confusion and shame as the result of the course which they followed, and the man against whom all their power was directed was raised high in public esteem and popularity. Great cities conferred their freedom upon Mr. Parnell. He received on every side manifestations of public respect. The cause for which he was fighting was greatly advanced. [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: But he was innocent.] I do not for one moment want to institute any exact comparison between the circumstances of that case and the case with which we are now called upon to deal. I do say that in the one case upon the specific fact alleged, Lord Milner is clearly guilty, and in the other case upon the specific fact alleged that Mr. Parnell was proved to be unjustly accused. But the moral which I draw from the Parnell affair—a moral which, I think, may be drawn also from the conflict of the House of Commons with Mr. Bradlaugh in 1880—is that it is never worth while for a great Party to pursue a private person, and least of all when that private person happens also to be a political opponent. If we were a political Party clutching precariously at power it might be worth while to strike a blow at a prominent political opponent. But we have won so completely that the very ideas and forces to which we were opposed seem to have melted away as if they had never been. As we have triumphed, so we may be merciful; as we are strong, so we can afford to be generous. There are transactions in the government of States about which people may hold strong opinions, but which it may be much wiser, in the tolerance of overwhelming victory, deliberately to consign to silence and oblivion. I frankly own that I should not press these considerations on the House if the range of the Motion and the Amendment we are discussing was confined to this House, or even to this country. The Colonial Office deals with many questions which are almost as critical and almost as perilous as any questions with which the Foreign Office is concerned. But whereas the Foreign Office is increasingly regarded as outside the scope of Party politics, the Colonial Office lies in the heart and centre of the fiercest partisanship and controversy. It is inevitable, in view of what has occurred in South Africa, that the people should follow with the keenest attention events that take place in a land for which they have sacrificed and suffered so much. I do not complain. On the contrary, the Government are prepared to assert the right of the House of Commons to be consulted on all matters affecting the Colonies which may be said to involve in their largest and truest sense Imperial interests. But the situation in South Africa is difficult and complex. For its difficulty and complexity we are not responsible. We have succeeded to a legacy of financial, social, and racial confusion. There, on that bench, are the testators of evil. And, sir, what an inheritance! A country struggling back to civilization after being laid waste by fire and sword, with all the after consequences of rebellion and civil war, a great army from over the seas mobilised for immediate war, a ponderous constabulary, a costly and not too efficient nominated and imported bureaucracy, the great industries on which the development of the country depends all resting on an essentially unnatural, unhealthy, and unstable basis—in all this vicious tangle no circumstance of first importance can be discerned for which we on this side of the House are responsible. But we have got to face them all, and surely we have got difficulties enough without going out of the way to find them. [OPPOSITION ironical cheers.] Do not let hon. Gentlemen on this side be misled by those derisive cries, which, let me say, do very little honour to the Party, the Imperial Party, which, on every occasion for the last ten years, has been swift to impute want of patriotism to those who might not wholly share their views. When we have so many real things to do which must be done in the present and in the future, why cannot we leave the past alone? I feel it my duty to say to the House to-night that we believe, having some access to information of authority, that this Motion, if accepted, would undoubtedly aggravate social and racial animosity in South Africa, and that it would have the effect of increasing any tension which may unhappily exist there without any really effective purpose, or without securing in return any substantial advantage to Parliament or to this country. For 100 years South Africa has been divided by the quarrels of two white races, who are equally intolerant of each other, in a land where they are almost equally balanced. The noble Lord who is the subject of this Motion has played the chief part in the climax of that long and bitter duel; he has left behind him in South Africa many friends and partisans, and many foes. If the House of Commons takes the extreme step of passing a formal vote of censure upon that officer, one party in South Africa will be affronted, the other party in South Africa will be exultant. Every demonstration of hostility against Lord Milner on the one hand will be followed by a counter demonstration in his favour on the other—not because of any violent opinion which is entertained on account of the treatment of these Chinese labourers, but because Lord Milner has been the central figure in the tremendous events of the last eight years in South Africa. And I do say that we, who have the real difficulties of this problem thrust upon us day after day, should be incurring a grave responsibility if we lent ourselves to any circumstances or manifestation, however desirable, which had the effect of inflaming anew the bitter passions by which South Africa is racked. It is not my fault that I have been called upon to trespass so much on the good nature of the House to-day. I must ask the House to remember that a very great part of the machinery of public expression in these colonies is controlled by hands none too friendly to the present Government, or to the present majority in the House of Commons. The people out there only hear the worst of us; day after day, all South Africa that reads English is taught to believe that we do not care what happens to them, that we are anxious to ruin their material prosperity, and hon. Gentlemen opposite lend themselves readily to that business. But the Government has no such intentions or desires. We seek the material prosperity of the Transvaal, and of South Africa, we seek it not less earnestly because we believe that material prosperity can never be secured while it stands on a foundation which is unhealthy or unnatural. We desire to act fairly by both the great races in South Africa; we desire to labour, so far as opportunity and power may be given us, to effect a permanent settlement of that country in the interests of that country, and without any desire to secure any Party advantage by any particular treatment of the question in this way or in that. The Government nourish large designs for the establishment of Parliaments and the reconciliation of races, and there is no room in those designs for any exact or pedantic meting out of proper doses of justice to individuals concerned in the tragic events of the past. This Parliament has rightly aspired and has rightly claimed to exert an influence upon the course of politics which shall be intimate, immediate, and direct. No other Parliament in modern times has put forward that claim. Often the House of Commons can only speak words; to night it is enabled to take substantial and definite action; to night, by carrying the Amendment which we have placed on the Paper, by showing that we at any rate are prepared to set an example in saying, "Let bygones be bygones," the House of Commons can send a message to South Africa which cannot be perverted, misrepresented, or misunderstood—a message of comfort to a troubled people, a message of tolerance and conciliation to warring races, a message, indeed, of good hope to the Cape. It is for these reasons which I have endeavoured to set before the House that His Majesty's Government have placed on the Paper the Amendment which I now have the honour to move.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 1238.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 930.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'House' to the end of the Question, and insert the words 'while recording its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in breach of the law, desires, in the interests of peace and conciliation in South Africa, to refrain from passing censure upon individuals'"—(*Mr. Churchill*)—instead thereof."

Mr. Churchill.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the House will allow me in a very brief speech to make some comments on the extraordinary utterance which we have just had in explanation of the policy of the Government. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies began his speech with an air, I thought, of considerable self-satisfaction by saying that he was not going to imitate what he regarded as the policy of some of his predecessors on this bench, but was going, as he expressed it, to give clear and direct guidance to the House. Let the House compare the Amendment in which he proposes to give clear and direct guidance with the speech in which he has recommended that Amendment. In the first part of that speech the hon. Gentleman, lapsing into an unwonted mood, I think, of justice to the man who is the subject of debate to-night, said he thought it would not be proper that Lord Milner should be condemned without being heard; there were circumstances which had come to his knowledge in his department connected with all this transaction which deserved the attentive consideration of those who desired to pass censure on Lord Milner, and in his opinion that was a ground for not passing the Resolution of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Salford. But then he went on to say that he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Salford, and that there was nothing in the Resolution from which he differed; and I would further point out the fact that in the Amendment which the Government have put forward there is something about the interests of peace and conciliation in South Africa, but there is not one word connected with justice to the individual who is being attacked. What is the meaning of that part of the hon. Gentleman's speech in which he said that Lord Milner should be heard, if he really agrees with the Member for North Salford? If he thinks the censure of Lord Milner would be in these circumstances an injustice to Lord Milner, why does not that appear in the Government Amendment? What are we to say of a Government who admit that the Resolution before the House is unjust unless the person who is the subject of it is heard, and who move an Amendment in which that point is absolutely ignored? Then the hon. Gentleman talked about the responsibilities of himself and his colleagues, which, no doubt, are great, in connection with the whole of South African policy, and he said that Lord Milner had friends in South Africa as well as enemies. For my own part, from what I have seen of what has recently passed in this country, if I were Lord Milner there is no Boer I would not prefer as my enemy to some of the Gentlemen who attack him in this country while saying they do not attack the individual, but only the official, whatever that may mean. I do not know what the distinction may be worth. What does the whole argument of the Under-Secretary amount to but this, that they know that for years those who speak our language and who are loyal to our State have regarded Lord Milner as one of the greatest props and one of the greatest supports the British cause has ever had in that country? They may be wrong, but they think so. It is because the Government are afraid of Lord Milner's friends in South Africa, not because that they disagree with the Resolution—they say they agree with it—but because they are afraid of Lord Milner's friends in South Africa they abandon the Resolution and substitute the Amendment. There may be many Gentlemen on both sides of the House who are far more experienced in the affairs of South Africa than I am; but for my own part, if I were an Englishman living in South Africa, I should be able to see uncommonly little difference between the Resolution backed up by the speeches of the mover and the seconder on the one hand, and the Amendment backed up by the speech of the Under-Secretary on the other. So far as I am concerned I should in those circumstances say that this was an attack on a great citizen, who has done great work for the Empire, and I should infinitely prefer the speeches of the mover and the seconder to the insulting protection accorded to him by His Majesty's Government. The Under-Secretary has made an appeal to the hon. Gentleman below the gangway to withdraw his Resolution on these grounds. He said Lord Milner was a great man. Where is he now? He did wield great power. What is he now compared with hon. Gentlemen below the gangway? He had authority once. That authority has been taken away. He appealed to the Member for North Salford not to recreate him. I do not know whether the hon. Member for North Salford has the power to recreate many Lord Milners, but if he has, I hope he will exercise that beneficent power in the interests of the Empire. I think the Under-Secretary, and I think the House, have rather forgotten that they are arrogating to themselves the position of an historical judge. They are not dealing with an official, but with a man who is no longer an official. They are dealing with transactions that are over. They are attempting to record an historical judgment, and it is in the interests of the House itself, certainly not in the interests of Lord Milner, that I would earnestly beg them to reject with equal contempt the original Motion and the Amendment of the Government by which the Government have attempted to make these proceedings palatable to Lord Milner's friends in South Africa. Do let the House remember that Lord Milner's career, whether they approve or disapprove of it, was a long career and a great career, and whatever our judgment may be upon it, no human being with the smallest conception of facts can doubt that, at all events, it was a great career and a long career. Is it wise for this House to look back on that career and pass upon it one single judgment connected with one single event? Of this great career is the House to find nothing better to say than this:—

> "Mr. Byles, South Africa (High Commissioner),—That this House expresses its disapproval of the conduct of Lord Milner, as High Commissioner of South Africa and Governor of the Transvaal, in authorising the flogging of Chinese labourers in breach of the law, in violation of treaty obligations, and without the knowledge or sanction of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."

Is that to be the solitary notice which we are going to put in the journals of the House with regard to these great transactions in which Lord Milner's part has been insignificant neither in amount nor of a kind which can move the contempt or disapproval of any critic, to whatever Party he belongs? This House is all powerful in dealing with the present. With the past it has no more to do than any other historical critic. Do not let us to-night sully the pages of our journals by making it appear that this is all that a great representative assembly can say about one of the most eminent servants which this country ever possessed, while they are silent about all the more important passages in his career; do not let it be said that one indefensible blunder and one alone, not carrying with it great consequences, soon remedied, not in any way connected with the great lines of policy which it was his business to deal with—that that incident and that incident alone,is to be selected and have the honour of mention in the journals of the House. It is not for Gentlemen below the gangway on that side or on this, for any Gentleman on this front bench, or any Gentleman on the other front bench, to create or recreate Lord Milner. Such men are the rare fruits of the great political education which this country, whatever else may be said of it, has been able to give to her sons in such measure that no nation in the world can compare with it in its production of great public servants fitted to carry out the work of the nation in every part of the world. Lord Milner is among those servants one of the greatest; and it is in the interests of this House chiefly that I beg it to reject the Resolution which has been put down upon the Paper by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway, to reject that with the respect which we owe to strong convictions, however narrow may be the view taken of the events with which they deal, but to reject with not less decision the far more contemptible Amendment avowedly and openly moved by His Majesty's Government, not because they are zealous for justice, not because they are anxious to protect the individual, not because they have any regard for the great service of the Crown, but for no better reason than that they are afraid of our own countrymen in South Africa. The course which is suggested by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway is, I think, narrow and objectionable. The course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman has every defect suggested in the Resolution of the hon. Member, and it is, in addition to that, utterly mean and utterly contemptible. Let the House reject one and the other and show itself worthy to judge of the history of its own country.

*Mr. RUFUS ISAACS (Reading) proceeded to refer to the speeches which had been made.

Mr. G. H. Williamson (Worcester) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

*Mr. RUFUS ISAACS said that the speeches which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London could only have the effect of showing how much they had failed to appreciate the force of the argument which had been used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham himself. What this House was asked to do was to express its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in South Africa. Did hon. Members opposite approve of flogging? If they did not, they were logically bound to support that portion of the Motion which condemned it.

Mr. Byles rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

*Mr. RUFUS ISAACS said a second Question was whether hon. Members desired to forward the interests of peace and conciliation.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put accordingly, and negatived.

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes, 355; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 23.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W (T.'w'r'Hamlets, S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, J. H. (Essex, Romford)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire, N.E.)
Boulton, A. C. F. (Ramsey)
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.

Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce,Rt. Hn. James(Aberdeen
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt. Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir. T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm J.(S.Pancras,W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H(Sussex,E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J.(Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin,Charles Rawsay(Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christophers
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. A. (Herefordsh.S.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt. Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W. Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneton)
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
King,Alfred John (Knutsford)
Kitson, Sir James
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H.(Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. S. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G. Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare

Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Chas. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wodehouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hon Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt Hn A J. (City Lond.)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, J. H. M (Dublin Univ.)
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, Sir W. Evans-(T'r Ham.
Haddock, George R.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Dr. Frederick R.
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hills, J. W.
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Magnus, Sir Philip
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Renton, Major Leslie

Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts,S (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith,F. E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Snowden, P.
Stanley,Hon. Arthur(Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomson,W Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B.Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Forster.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House, while recording its condemnation of the flogging of Chinese coolies in breach of the law, desires, in the interests of peace and conciliation in South Africa, to refrain from passing censure upon individuals."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP BILL.

Bill to amend the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Tennant, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Steadman, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Mr. Wilkie.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP BILL.

"To amend the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday 10th May, and to be printed. [Bill 116.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) moved the Second Reading and was proceeding to explain the provisions of the Bill when objection was taken, it being after midnight.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said he had no objection to the Bill going to the Grand Committee on Law.

Objection was again taken and the Second Reading was deferred.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) objected.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) appealed to the hon. Member not to persist in his objection. The English Bill had been passed, and there was no reason why the Scotch Bill should not also be forwarded.

Question, "That this Bill be now read a second time," put and agreed to. Bill read a second time and Committed for this day.

Adjourned at twenty-four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 22nd March, 1906.

EARL OF BESSBOROUGH.

Petition of Edward, Earl of Bessborough, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Ponsonby of Syonsby in the Peerage of England, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Rugby Subordinate School Bill [H.L.]; London Squares and Enclosures Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed, provided that the First Schedule be amended by the omission of properties numbered 28, 29, 30, and 31 in the parish of St. Leonard, Hythe, and of the properties numbered 6, 7, 11, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, and 31 in the parish of Sandgate.

Read, and agreed to.

Fulwood Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 8th and 13th instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Scottish Union and National Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; read 2^a, and committed.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [H.L.], Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; read 2^a, and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Thames Deep Water Dock (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Order of the day for the Second Reading discharged. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Manchester Churches Bill [H.L.]; read 2^a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious education in schools; of teachers and parents and guardians of children in Yealand Conyers National School; St. Peters, Oldham; Smithhills Dean; Ellesmere School; Little Hutton, St. John Baptist; Crawshawbooth National School; Lower Darwen St. James Guide; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 482. St. Lucia (Report for 1904).

CHARITY COMMISSION.

Fifty-third Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1905.

TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

Letter of instructions to the Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire and report upon certain matters connected with the future constitutions of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended December 31st, 1905, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with the reports of inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into. Part I. Returns of accidents.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1879.

Irish Teachers Pension Rules, 1906.

SUPERANUATION.

1. Treasury Minute, dated March 15th, 1906, declaring Aden and its vicinity an unhealthy district for the purposes of the Superannuation Acts, 1859 and 1876.

2. Treasury Minute, dated March 15th, 1906, modifying Treasury Minute of May 27th, 1884, as to addition of years for purpose of pension to actual length of service of persons appointed to the office of clerk of the Upper Division in the Charity Commission.

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.

Account of the gross amount of all bank annuities and any annuities for terms of years, transferred, and of all sums of money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the gross amount of annuities for lives and for terms of years which have been granted for the same, and contracts for payments on death which have been made within the year ended January 5th, 1906.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL [H.L.] (No. 32).

A Bill to provide for the appointment of a public trustee, to amend the Judicial Trustees Act, 1896, and otherwise to amend the law relating to the administration of trusts.

CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL [H.L.] (No. 33).

A Bill to amend the law respecting appeals in criminal cases.

Were presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH AND CHINESE LABOUR.

The **EARL of DONOUGHMORE**: My Lords, seeing the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in his place, I would like, with your Lordships' permission, to put to him a Question of which I have given him private notice, namely, to ask whether the account, at page 7 of *The Times* of March 21st last, of a speech delivered by him at the Hotel Great Central, Marylebone Road, on the previous evening is correct in attributing to him the statement that "the Chinaman did not, as was claimed by the late Government, come to South Africa of his own free will;" and to ask, if this account is incorrect, in what way it should be corrected.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My

Lords, the report from which my noble friend quotes is not a verbatim one, and a negative has got into it which absolutely reverses my intended meaning. The passage that the noble Lord quoted should have read—

> "The Chinaman, it was claimed by the late Government, came to South Africa of his own free will, and in future, when in South Africa, if he wished to go back and had not the money in his own pocket, this country would find it for him. That removed some of the taint attached to the system."

I stated that the late Government had said that they secured to the Chinaman a free choice of going to South Africa, and my argument simply was this, that the present Government had complemented that, and affirmed it, and strengthened it by also making it perfectly open to the Chinaman, when he got to South Africa and found what his conditions of labour were, to return to China if he wished, and I said that if he had not the money to return at his own expense this country was prepared to find it. In order to confirm the statement I have just made I may quote from another newspaper, which gave what I said in this way—

> "Not only did the Chinaman go to South Africa of his own free will, but in future, if he wished to go back and had not the money, we in this country would find the money for him."

THE SOUTH AFRICAN INQUIRY.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I have to inform the House that the Committee which is to proceed to South Africa has now been appointed. The members will be Sir West Ridgeway, who will be chairman, Lord Sandhurst, Sir Francis Hopwood, and Colonel Johnston. I propose to have laid on the Table the letter of instructions to the Committee.

THE STANDING ORDERS.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, it has been the practice to confine the Committee of Selection to four Peers besides the Chairman of Committees. I have often felt that that is rather a small number, and that it would be desirable to add to the Committee a certain number of Peers who are accustomed to work on Private Bill Committees and also the Leaders on both sides of the House, for I think it is very desirable that they should be made acquainted with the services which noble Lords render upon Select Committees, as to which now I think a great deal of ignorance prevails. I therefore ask your Lordships to amend the Standing Orders, and in due course I shall move to add a certain number of noble Lords to the Committee of Selection. I beg to move that the Motion standing in my name be agreed to.

Moved, that the Standing Orders be amended as follows: 97. The Chairman of Committees and such other Lords as shall be named by the House shall be appointed a Committe to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Local Bill or Provisional Order Confirmation Bill, and shall appoint the Chairman of such Committee, and shall name the Bill or Bills which shall be taken into consideration on the first or any later day of meeting of such Committee. If a vacancy occur in any such Select Committee in the interval between any two sittings of the House, the Chairman of Committees may appoint a Lord to fill such vacancy, and in such case shall report the same to the House at the next sitting—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to. Standing Order amended accordingly to be printed as amended (No. 34.)

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD HYLTON: My Lords, in asking you to give a Second Reading to this Bill I shall not detain your Lordships long, for it is in the main the same Bill that your Lordships passed last year after it had been referred to a Select

Committee. The two principal objects of the Bill are (1) to promote and encourage the construction of suitable dwellings of a certain type for the working classes, cottages that are detached or semi-detached, and to free them from some very onerous and, I think I may almost say, tyrannical conditions which, originally intended and suitable for the crowded streets of cities, are now imposed on anyone building cottages of any kind in totally rural districts; and (2) to attempt to provide a solution, easy, cheap, and expeditious, in cases where difficulties arise between would-be builders and local authorities as to the construction, meaning, and interpretation of the by-laws. At present there is no such means of a friendly or amicable solution, and the consequence is that a considerable amount of litigation has taken place all over the country, and a great deal of public and private money has been needlessly wasted and consequent friction and ill-feeling has been caused.

Twelve months ago the question might, I think, have been fairly asked whether there was any demand for legislation of this kind; whether the grievances which it hopes to meet were of such a character that legislation was necessary; whether the existing building by-laws did, as a matter of fact, check, hinder, and stop building in rural districts; and whether public and private funds were being wasted and frittered away in unnecessary litigation in the matter. But I think that since the debate which took place last year in this House on the Bill that I then had the honour of introducing, and especially since the publication of the evidence that was given before the Select Committee, there cannot be any difficulty in answering all those questions in the affirmative; and I should like, on behalf of the supporters of this Bill and those who feel interested in these topics, to take this opportunity of expressing our best thanks to the noble Marquess the late Leader of this House for having granted that Select Committee, whose evidence has enabled the public to see how widespread and almost universal in country districts are the evils of which I have complained.

With reference to that point, perhaps your Lordships will allow me to refer to the report of the special committee appointed by the Central Chamber of Agriculture to deal with the question of rural building by-laws, which was presented to the Council of the Central Chamber of Agriculture on February 6th last. The committee stated that they had held seven meetings, that they had examined a number of witnesses, and that they would have carried the inquiry much further but for the evidence that was given before the Select Committee of your Lordships' House last year. The committee added that they were deeply impressed by the magnitude of the interests at stake, and that to encourage the erection of cheap and suitable dwellings we required a great deal of elasticity, a quality not to be found in the existing by-laws. They stated that on the proper lodging of the agricultural population depended to a great extent the solution of the problem of the migration of the agricultural population to towns. I think that such evidence from a totally independent body, and one so important, will carry some weight with your Lordships.

Lord Hylton.

I quoted a great number of cases last year from different parts on the country in which specific grievances occurred, and I have no intention of wearying your Lordships by travelling over the same ground again. I quoted instances where by-laws forbade any materials being used for buildings except brick and stone. As your Lordships may perhaps be aware in many villages in Wiltshire there are excellent cottages built of chalk. This provision would have ruled such cottages out. It would have ruled out any attempt at utilising cement and other material. It would have ruled out all the wooden cottages of the south of England. In fact, the only materials in many cases allowed—they make no exception whatever—are brick and stone. Then, again, I quoted to your Lordships cases where cottages were not allowed to be built because the plans indicated that in one or two bedrooms the mathematical proportion of the window space to the floor space did not correspond to what was laid down in the building by-laws; and the result—the very absurd result—of that was that by reducing the size of the bedrooms in the intended cottages they would comply with the by-laws, whereas if they were left larger and better bedrooms, as intended by the builders, they would not comply, and sanction was refused. There are also cases where plans have been rejected because at every point of the ceiling of the attic rooms, by six inches, or even perhaps by so minute a quantity as three inches, the height did not correspond to what was indicated in the by-laws. These cases I brought before your Lordships last year as showing the great difficulties with regard to the present by-laws, and that they all tended to increase the expense of building.

In bringing forward this measure I do not urge it on your Lordships' acceptance from the point of view of the landowners and builders. I urge it chiefly on behalf of the working people who are to inhabit these cottages, because, as your Lordships are perfectly aware, the more expensive the building is the higher must the rent tend to become, and the sufferers are not so much the landowners and the builders as the people who have to live in these cottages. I think that perhaps the principal grievance of all is that there is no court of appeal, no jurisdiction to which would-be builders can appeal to decide on any difficulty that arises between them and the local authorities. I wish to rest my case rather on general grievances, but I should like just to read a few lines from a letter received from the agent of a large landowner in the north of England. Writing from Wakefield, under date 16th March, he says—

> "Here we cannot build a coal-house even, or add on to a farm building, without having to get out plans of the fullest description for submission to the authorities. The erection of a wooden building to protect a wheelbarrow would be illegal. . . . . Lord St. Oswald was able to erect a shed at his colliery works without reference to anybody, they being exempt; but he could not erect a small building in connection with his farm without the necessity of preparing elaborate plans."

I should like to refer to the evidence of one witness. Mr. Munro, one of the principal officers of the Local Government Board, was a witness before us; and, in answer to a question whether under the existing law he considered hardships were entailed, he said—

> "Oh, yes, of course there will always be hardships under the existing law."

"Hard cases," I think was the exact expression he used. I venture to think that the words of that gentleman are alone sufficient justification for an attempt at legislation on this point.

If hard cases are brought before Parliament in which Chinamen or Russian Jews are concerned, Parliament makes it its business to inquire into them and to endeavour to redress those grievances; and I think I may claim that it is equally the duty of Parliament to examine and, if possible, redress hard cases in which British workmen's interests are concerned, for, as I said just now, this legislation is really not attempted on behalf of landowners or builders of cottages, but in the hope of being able to ensure British workmen a constant provision of good and suitable buildings. I think I am not going too far in saying that the evidence which was elicited before the Select Committee last year showed that in consequence of the tyranny and absurdity of some of the building by-laws landowners and cottage builders were in many districts holding their hands and refusing at present to go on building. There was a case from Lincolnshire in which we were told that a number of gentleman had determined to cease building any more cottages until some reform was made in the building by-laws.

I will endeavour to anticipate three arguments that may be, or might be, brought against legislation of this character. The first argument is that if you pass a measure of this kind you will let in the jerry builder: that very poor cottages of unsuitable character will be built. I do not think that this Bill will give the jerry builder any greater opportunities than he at present enjoys. Your Lordships will observe that the Bill only applies to detached and semi-detached cottages; and, as we all know, the jerry builder is in the habit of acquiring a small piece of land and building upon it a row or terrace of houses. In cases of that kind the Bill would not apply. Further, my Lords, the exemptions contained in Clause 2 we endeavour to safeguard by many regulations with regard to sanitary matters; so that I hope and trust, if the Bill becomes law, the jerry builder, at all events, will not be able to take advantage of it.

Then there is another argument that might be used against the Bill, and it is that the building by-laws of 1877, the old urban model, however unsuitable for country and rural districts, can be replaced by the model rural code of 1901. If the Local Government Board had the power of making rural district councils give up the old code and take the new code, there would be a great deal to be said in favour of that course; but your Lordships are probably aware that it is the fact that the Local Government Board, once they have sanctioned a code of building by-laws for any particular district, have no power whatever to force that district to take a new code in place of the old one. The late President of the Local Government Board and Mr. Burns, who is at present at the head of that Department, have very wisely and judiciously issued circulars to the rural district councils, pointing out to them how advisable it would be that the new code of 1901 should be adopted in place of the code of 1877, but in a great many cases no notice whatever has been taken of the Local Government Board's circulars; and there are reasons, I am afraid, why those circulars will remain nothing but waste paper.

It is far from my intention to make an attack on the administration of rural district councils, but we must not forget that in many cases, I think I may say in the majority of cases, there are people sitting as members of these councils to whom it is rather an advantage that the council should be working under a complicated and inadequate system of by-laws. You cannot forget that on most rural district councils in the country you find very often a builder or his son, or his brother; you find, perhaps, an architect, and you often find that the clerk to the council is a solicitor. Now, to all these people complicated and difficult by-laws under which to work brings grist to the mill, and those are not the people to whom it is at all agreeable that a simple, cheap, easy code of building by-laws should be in force. In cases where litigation takes place between the builder and the local authority, even if the case is won by the landowner or the builder, on whom does the cost of the legal proceedings fall? Why, on the successful landowner or builder, because in nine cases out of ten he is the principal ratepayer in the neighbourhood. With him it is a case, I am afraid, generally, of "heads I lose, tails you win," in any case of litigation with the rural district council. There is another argument that is rather more justifiable on the part of rural district councils as to why they will not adopt the new building code. The chairman of a rural district council pointed out to me some time ago that it had taken them years to get the original building code sanctioned by the Local Government Board. An enormous amount of correspondence had passed on the subject; and at last, after considerable delay, a code was sanctioned. He used words to this effect—

"We know that the new code of 1901 would be a much better one in this district, but we are not disposed to give up our old code and apply to the Local Government Board for a new one when we see reason to fear that we may be another three or four years before we get the new code sanctioned, and in the meantime the whole district will be in a state of confusion, and will not know under what building laws it is. We prefer, therefore, to keep our old code."

Another argument on behalf of rural district councils against adopting the new code was brought before the Select Committee last year. It is rather an amazing argument, but it was brought forward by the clerk to the East Grinstead District Council, whose view was that if they got a new code for building in their district, building would became cheaper and easier, and that that would be very hard on the people who had invested capital under the old code. Therefore he said they did not mean to apply for the new code. In dealing with this question you must remember that there are gentlemen like the clerk to the East Grinstead District Council and his colleagues who take this—I venture to think unfair—view of the problems that await us in considering how to provide better accommodation.

There is this further argument against legislation of this kind, that it would be preferable to give rural district councils the power of dispensing, in such cases as they may think fit, with the regulations of their own by-laws. Now, my

Lords, I venture to think that the majority of your Lordships will not consider the granting of such dispensing power a satisfactory solution of the problem, because it must open the door, at all events, to chances of jobbery, corruption, and favouritism. A council might find some reason for giving a dispensation to B. which they refused to A. But so unworkable are the present building by-laws found in several rural districts, that the councils have actually used this dispensing power, although it is illegal, and it has been declared that any ratepayer may proceed by a mandamus to make a rural district council enforce its own by-laws. I asked one witness who appeared before us last year—I think he was the chairman of the Chelmsford Rural District Council—whether, as a matter of fact, his council did claim this dispensing power, and his answer was—

> "We do not claim it, but we exercise it."

I think that a practice of that kind is an argument for legislation in this direction, because it shows that the present by-laws are found, at all events in that district, so unworkable that the council adopt a totally illegal course in order to obviate the difficulties. I was an interested witness of a debate that took place not very long ago in this House on my noble friend Lord Harrowby's initiation with regard to small holdings. I think your Lordships will agree with me that if an extension of the system of small holdings, of which my noble friend is so enlightened a promoter, is to take place to any great extent over this country, we shall want a considerable extension of houses in which to lodge the small holders and their families, and, therefore, I venture to claim that a Bill of this character, if it can do anything to promote the building of cottages, is almost entitled to logical precedence to a measure such as my noble friend advocates, and of which I also am a warm supporter. I do not pretend that this Bill is of a wide or extensive character, or that its result may be very wide or extensive, but I do think, as a witness before the Committee last year told us, that it will have in many districts a very considerable and beneficent result, and I therefore trust your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

I will not trouble the House by going at any length through the clauses of the Bill. I have had the opportunity of conferring with the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board on this Bill, and I should like to express my grateful thanks to them for having met me and discussed the Bill with me. I believe that certain Amendments will be moved when we go into Committee, should the Bill be fortunate enough to secure a Second Reading, and I can only say that I shall be most willing to meet the views of the Government. I will defer any explanation of the clauses until the Committee stage.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*Lord Hylton*).

LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: My Lords, as a Member of the Select Committee which was appointed by your Lordships' House to inquire into this question, perhaps your Lordships will allow me to say one or two words in support of this Bill. After what my noble friend has said there is not very much to add except to assure your Lordships, which I think is almost unnecessary, that this is not a Bill of a polemical nature; it is not in the least of a Party character, but is an attempt to deal with a difficulty which is acknowledged on almost every side. The Committee to which my noble friend referred examined a good many witnesses from various parts of the country, who almost one and all supported some amendment of the present building by-laws, especially where they did involve a very vexatious restriction upon building schemes. In fact those witnesses who were in a certain measure against the Bill were not so much against its principle as against certain clauses of it, and were in favour of certain modifications. There was an undoubted consensus of opinion in favour of some change. Not only was this fully testified by the witnesses themselves, but it was brought out in evidence that many local authorities would wish to have the change, and were quite alive to the anomalous nature of some of their own regulations.

I do not propose to trouble your Lordships with much of the evidence, but I should like to refer to that given by Sir William Chance, who gave evidence of one or two very absurd instances of these restrictions. He referred to a scheme to utilise some old buildings in the making of new ones. There was nothing whatever against the scheme from a sanitary or from any other point of view. He said—

> "The scheme came before the committee of the district council. They knew that what they were going to do was an absolute absurdity, but they said that if the scheme was to be carried out the gentleman in question must pull down part of the building, as there was not sufficient open space at the rear."

The witness was asked—

> "Do you think your opinions are shared by your colleagues on the council?"

and his answer was—

> "I have given the two cases we had before us last Thursday. We have a by-laws committee, every member of which said the same thing, how absurd it was. But they added, 'We are bound to carry it out, otherwise we should have one law for one and one for another. We must have one law for all.'"

I think that is sufficient to show your Lordships that the grievance is not only felt from outside, but by many of the local authorities themselves.

As has been already remarked, this Bill, although at first sight rather technical, goes into deep and wide subjects. It is very intimately connected with the question of small holdings, about which we had an interesting debate some few days ago, because, of course, the success of small holdings very much depends on dwelling houses and buildings suitable for the small holders being erected without involving prohibitive costs.

One word about builders. It may possibly be that some of the builders object to an easier scheme of building because it would not give them quite such lucrative jobs, but I think the more sensible of them will see that the more restrictions are placed on building the less business there is, and, therefore, it is to their advantage to support any well-defined scheme. The matter is not without difficulty. It may be said to be at once simple and also difficult, but I think that the difficulties are more apparent than real. The matter has been thoroughly considered and thoroughly threshed out by this Committee. This is a Bill which attempts a practicable and reasonable solution of an admitted difficulty, and for this reason I hope your Lordships will consent to give it a Second Reading.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I am sure the House and the country are under an obligation to the noble Lord opposite for having brought this subject before your Lordships' House. He made a most excellent speech last year on the subject, and his Bill of last year passed a Second Reading and was then referred to a Select Committee. The noble Lord has given us the substance of the Report of that Committee. So far as the principle of the Bill itself is concerned, the Government are entirely in sympathy. They, like everybody else, are fully aware that the bye-laws as they at present exist want considerable revision and amendment.

But I am bound to say that the Bill, as it stands, does require a certain amount of alteration. I will venture to point out to the noble Lord a few of the alterations which we consider absolutely necessary, and if he can see his way to agree to these alterations, His Majesty's Government will be very glad to give the Bill a sympathetic and kindly support. In the first place, the title of the Bill would have to be altered, because, as it stands now, it embraces an Amendment of the Public Health Act, and we think it should be restricted, and I think the House will agree that it should be restricted, to building by-laws only. Under Clause 2 the Bill would apply to the whole of England and Wales. It would not, of course, touch London, but it would include Manchester, Leicester, and other large towns, which I venture to think is not the object of the noble Lord, and perhaps he would agree that the operation of this clause should be restricted to rural districts, or to urban districts to which it may be made to extend by order of the Local Government Board.

Then we should like to see another sub-section introduced into this clause running on parallel lines with Clause 4. If the noble Lord would agree to my proposal, Clause 4 might be struck out altogether. We propose to exclude from the exemption in Clause 2 by-laws relating to health, and to insert there a new sub-section, to be Sub-section 5, with the object of bringing in the by-laws under Section 157 of the Public Health Act, 1875, with respect to the structure of walls, foundations, and roofs, for securing stability, for prevention of fire, and for purposes of health. I do not think the noble Lord will have any objection to that. Clause 3 can stand as it is. Clause 4, as I have said, we propose to omit altogether. Clause 5 can stand as it is.

We propose to omit altogether Clause 6, about which I believe there is a very strong diversity of opinion. As the noble Lord knows, this clause entirely alters, and I believe is intended to alter, the position of the Local Government Board as to its relations with local authorities as regards by-laws. The Local Government Board, as the House knows, can suggest an Amendment of by-laws, but they cannot force their own views on the local authorities. They can refuse to sanction by-laws submitted to them by the local authorities, but they cannot enforce a by-law of their own on an unwilling local authority; and, as the noble Lord informed the House, when a by-law is once made the Local Government Board have no power to alter it. Clause 6 of this Bill would give the Local Government Board an entirely new power, and most people think that that would be very strongly resented by local authorities; but if the principal of the exemptions in Clause 2, by the insertion of the sub-section to which I have alluded, and the appeal in Clause 7 are omitted, the main grievance as regards elasticity in the by-laws disappears.

Sometimes, as the noble Lord said, the borough or district council refuses to pass the plans, and go so far as to decline to give any reasons whatever. That happened to me this year. A district council, which had allowed me to put up four cottages in one part of the district three or four years ago, suddenly turned round and refused to allow me to put up two more in another part of the district, though they were to be identically the same cottages, built to exactly the same plans and specifications. I appealed to the chairman of the district council. He was a very sensible man, and the objections were waived. But no doubt councils do decline to approve of plans without giving any reason; and, as the noble Lord asks, What is a man to do under these circumstances? He may go on with his building, but he runs the risk of a prosecution. If he is prosecuted and loses his case he will have to pull down the house, and if he wins his case he has to pay the expenses of the action. It is not thought at all unreasonable to allow a court of petty sessions to determine whether a particular proposal does or does not conform to the by-laws.

In these circumstances, if the noble Lord will give me a general assurance that he has no great objection to these limitations, I can assure him there will be no opposition, as far as the Government is concerned, to the Second Reading, but my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board looks upon this Bill as an experimental measure, which indeed it is, and one the operation of which must be very carefully watched. It may encourage the building of houses—everybody hopes it will—but my right hon. friend is very anxious that nothing should be done which might, in any way, diminish the safeguards against insanitary conditions and the erection of bad houses.

Lord BURGHCLERE: My Lords, as my noble friend opposite knows, I have taken a very deep interest in this Bill, and I also had the honour of being a member of the Select Committee which your Lordships appointed last year to consider the Bill then brought forward by the noble Lord. I hope, therefore, your Lordships will allow me to make a few observations on the statement we have just heard from my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.

I entirely agree with the noble Earl that Clause 6 ought to come out. Clause 6, if I understand it aright, interferes with the position of local authorities in their own districts—a principle which I am sure my noble friend entirely disagrees with. It would also give the Local Government Board a very considerable amount of extra work in sending down inspectors, and would altogether increase the heavy duties which now fall upon that Department of the State. With regard to the alteration of Clause 2 which my noble friend has suggested, I would venture to point out to His Majesty's Government and to my noble friend that there are districts which are not purely urban, and not purely rural, but which, as it were, intermix. I shall be glad to hear during the Committee stage how the Government propose to meet that especial difficulty.

The only other criticism I would venture to make is with regard to Clause 7. If I understand my noble friend aright, the Government are in favour of retaining that clause as it stands. I personally have had some hesitation in adopting that course. Clause 7 gives to petty sessions—that is, to magistrates—power to interfere with what the local authority has determined, and if it is objectionable for the Local Government Board to interfere with what the district council has settled in its own district, it seems to me to be equally objectionable that the magistrates of the district should be allowed to interfere in local government matters. I venture to think that if this clause is retained it should be so altered that magistrates should be able to adjudicate only on the matters definitely set down in the Bill if they are not carried out by the local authorities. With regard to sanitation and other matters, they should not have power, as it appears to me they would have under Clause 7, to interfere with the determinations which the local authorities themselves had arrived at. I approve of the principle of the Bill, and I am sure that if properly carried out it will be of great benefit to rural districts, and may, in some way, though not entirely, by the creation of cheap, wholesome lodgings for the working classes, prevent that migration from the rural districts to the cities which I am sure all your Lordships deplore.

Lord Burghclere.

On Question, Bill read 2^a. accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order).

Bill passed through Committee and reported to the House without Amendment.

Moved, that the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The **EARL of HALSBURY**: I trust your Lordships will not agree to the Motion which the noble Lord has just moved. This Bill introduces a new system of law altogether, and I think it would be rather dangerous that it should be allowed to go through without being referred to the Standing Committee.

***LORD AVEBURY**: I moved the Motion negativing the Standing Committee as the Bill had twice been through Committee in this House without any Amendment being suggested, but in deference to the opposition of the noble and learned Lord, the late Lord Chancellor, I withdraw the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn. Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

***LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD**: My Lords, the matters that affect the consideration of this Measure are but few, and I will state them very briefly to your Lordships. The object generally of the Bill is to extend the operation of the Acts known as the Public Libraries Acts, and

I assume that your Lordships feel that public libraries, so far as they exist in this country, are of benefit to the community and deserve encouragement. As the Acts that control the existence of these libraries have received the support and assent of your Lordships, I assume also that the legislation, so far as it has gone, equally meets with your Lordships' consent.

As the matter stands now, the operation of these Acts is confined to limited areas. By the principal Act of 1892 and the Amending Act, public libraries can only be established in urban districts or in a parish. Reasons have lately been brought forward of a practical character to cause some to think that the benefit of these libraries should be extended to counties, and if these institutions are of advantage and utility in urban districts one cannot see why they should be other than beneficial in other districts. I am aware that there are practical difficulties, but I hope they may be overcome, in the way of applying these Acts to counties. At the same time I do not think your Lordships will contend that there is any reason why counties should be deprived of institutions which have been found of great benefit in urban districts.

The question is, If you apply these Acts to counties, how can you carry them into effect in relation to those counties? You must have a governing body. In an urban district you have, of course, the local council, and if you have a governing body at all in the case of counties, it must be, I presume, the county council. Since this Bill has been printed I have received a great many communications from noble Lords, but though I have been very much struck with the courtesy of the letters I cannot say that I have received much encouragement from them. The objection put to me by the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries was that it was not thought well to give the power of approval of the application of the Acts to a representative body. The noble Earl thinks the power ought to remain with the ratepayers as a whole to vote on this question. There is no doubt a great deal to be said in favour of that view, and I hope it will meet with your Lordships' approval that it should not be left to the county council alone, but that a plebiscite should be taken of the ratepayers as a whole. That is a provision that I am willing to see inserted in the Bill, and I hope it will remove the objection to the present clause on the part of the Local Government Board.

A general objection exists to any increase in the local rate, and I find that those who for particular reasons take an interest in this measure think the rate could be reduced by one-half, and that instead of being one penny, as it is in the principal Act, a half-penny rate would be sufficient in the larger areas. In a Welsh county recently a beneficent gentleman offered a certain sum for the provision of a public library, but, much to the regret of everyone, the offer could not be accepted and the county was denied the benefits of this grant because there is at present no power of creating a body to enable the sum to be received and applied for the purposes intended.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord James of Hereford.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN rose to move "That the Bill be read 2ª this day six months." The noble Earl said: My Lords, I am sure there is no Member of your Lordships' House who wishes to be in any way lacking in courtesy to my noble and learned friend who has just spoken, and I am very glad he recognises that all those to whom he has spoken with regard to this Bill have not been deficient in kind expressions towards himself, although they may not have been equally favourable to this Bill

The state of the law at the present time is as has been stated by my noble and learned friend. The Act of 1892 confers upon parishes and urban districts the power, by a vote of the ratepayers, of obtaining a public library, and, of course, any parish in a county which desires to have a public library may, by a vote of its ratepayers, obtain one. Therefore, in this sense, the benefits of the Libraries Acts can at present be obtained by any parish or any urban district within a county. This Bill proposes to go further, and to say that there may be a county library as distinct from parish or urban district libraries. I think it is unnecessary to point out to your Lordships that a county is a very unfit district for a library. What centre can my noble friend or anyone of your Lordships name which would be convenient for the ratepayers generally of the county?

Not only that, but who would use this library? I presume that in most cases the centre adopted would be the county town. To an enormous majority of the rural parishes a library in a county town would be absolutely useless, and it would certainly be so to the ratepayers generally. I can conceive that there may be members of a county council who may go to the county town half an hour too soon, and who may wish to have some convenient sort of club in which to read French novels and otherwise amuse themselves until the time of their business arrives. As your Lordships know, there are always a certain number of persons who live in the vicinity of county towns to whom a library of this kind might be a very convenient lounge. But, apart from them, I do not see how to the county ratepayers generally a library could be of any use. My noble friend said, and he was rather hesitating on that point I thought, that there had been some demand for this Bill. I would ask him, was that demand made by the County Councils Association, or was it made by any county council in particular, because if it was made by one county council in particular, which, for the purposes of its own members, wishes to have a library, let it bring in a Private Bill, but do not let it, simply because it wishes to have a public library for itself, obtain that library by a general Bill of this kind.

My noble and learned friend goes further. He admits himself that a county is not a suitable area, because he proposes to alter entirely the procedure laid down by the Act of 1892. That Act says that a vote of the ratepayers is to be taken, but my noble and learned friend proposes that the library shall be an accomplished fact by a vote of the county council itself. I think there might be in a county council five or six people who desired a library of this sort, and we know that if half a-dozen people in an assembly set their minds upon attaining some object, they will find occasions when members are not attending for carrying their object out, and the ratepayers of the county, without knowing much about it, would suddenly find themselves saddled with a library which it would be impossible for the majority of them to use, but which they would have the satisfaction of paying for.

Clause 8 of the Bill deals with exemption. It provides that—

"Where the Public Libraries Acts, 1892 to 1901, have been adopted by any urban authority or parish within the county council district, such urban district or parish shall be exempted from payment of the Public Libraries Acts Rate levied by the county council authority."

What will the result be? Every district in a county which wishes for a library will have got it, and it will be paying for it. The parishes which have not adopted the Act will alone remain as contributors to the cost of the library in the county town or in the centre of the county. I cannot help thinking that those who drafted this Bill are not very well acquainted with county administration. For instance, it says in Clause 2—

"For the purposes of this Act, and subject to the provisions thereof, every county council district in England and Wales shall be a library district."

I am not aware that there is such a thing in existence as a county council district. The administrative area of a county council is the county. When I first read that clause I thought this was a proposal to establish district libraries and not county libraries. That, at all events, is one instance which I think shows that those who have drawn up this Bill have not studied the question very deeply.

I do not think that I need detain your Lordships longer. I must say that it seems to me that a county is not at all a proper area for a library. As to the assessment, the county rate is an unfortunate fund into which everybody thinks he has a right to dip his hand, and of late years the additional burdens which have been laid on the county rates have been enormous, and they are constantly increasing. The much-burdened ratepayer has expressed his disgust in a variety of ways. I am not at all sure that he did not do it very largely in the ballot box not long ago, and I submit to your Lordships that we ought to be very careful indeed in this House in scrutinising Bills which propose to impose additional burdens on the county rates. For these reasons I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment moved—

"To omit the word 'now' in order to insert at the end of the Motion these words 'this day six months.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I am bound to confess that, on the Bill as it stands, I think most of your Lordships will be disposed to agree with my noble friend who has just sat down; but there are special circumstances in this case which have induced my noble and learned friend to bring in this measure, and I am empowered to make a suggestion to him. If he will agree that a rural council should have the same power to adopt the Acts as an urban council has now under the Act of 1893, the charge to be on the local rate, but that the county council should have the power to contribute to the library out of the county rate if it so chooses, I am empowered to say that His Majesty's Government will offer no objection to the Second Reading.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, I should like to say one word in response to the remarks which have just been made by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. I understand his proposal is to bring before the House a totally new Bill. This Bill is to extend to county councils powers which are at present given to urban districts and parishes. The county is already completely covered by powers to every parish and urban council to have libraries in their own district. I can quite understand that it may be desirable, and I do not see any objection to extending that power to rural district councils. But I think that would be a complete redrafting of the Bill, and if it is only proposed to extend to rural district councils the same power that is given to urban councils, it would be much better to withdraw this Bill and bring in a Bill for that purpose. In fact, if that is all that is intended, all the machinery in this Bill would fall to the ground, and there would be very little left of the present drafting except the title.

The principle of the Bill, that is to say, that local authorities should have powers with regard to libraries, has been over and over again admitted. I am surprised at my noble friend bringing forward this Bill without giving the House any reasons, the area being already covered in the way I have described, why a county council should be made the authority for exercising the powers under the Libraries Act. It is an unsuitable area. It would be impossible to choose any place or places in a county which would be convenient for a building of which county ratepayers could make use. As a matter of fact, as has been stated, the county town would probably be the only suitable centre, and in many county towns there already exist very adequate libraries. Not only do they exist for the use of the town itself, or the parish in which it is situated, but there are powers under the existing Acts for the authorities allowing the people outside that area to use the library, either on payment or without payment. It seems to me that that would be a much more convenient way of meeting the case of the neighbouring parishes than by putting a rate on the ratepayers who are living very likely at a great distance, and who would probably never use the powers under the Act at all.

I join with Lord Camperdown in what he said about rateable powers being continually put on county councils. There is never a meeting of the County Councils Association where there is not some complaint of Acts passed by Parliament giving powers to county councils and putting the whole expense of administering those Acts on the county ratepayers. While we acknowledge that the rating of agricultural districts is not in a satisfactory condition, and while it has been recognised by the Local Taxation Committee that there ought to be material changes with regard to the taxation of the country, nothing has been done, but the ratepayers of the county are continually having fresh obligations thrown upon them, some of them of a very serious nature. Parliament passes these Acts and gives the administration of them to county councils, but makes no contribution out of the Consolidated Fund towards their cost. After what my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has said, I hope my noble and learned friend will consider that it would hardly be his Bill if amended in the way suggested, and personally I would hesitate to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill unless it was proved that there is a greater demand for it than has been shown to the House to-day.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, in addressing your Lordships for the first time I desire to ask for that indulgence which is always asked for, and rightly asked for, by those who rise under such circumstances. The Bill before your Lordships' House is one which, I think, in substance, in regard to its object, probably all of us would sympathise with, but the question which His Majesty's Government have to consider is as to how far the machinery proposed by the Bill is adequate to carry out the objects which the Bill proposes, and how far in these days, when questions of rating exercise such great influence and excite such great interest, the burdens which would arise under this Bill would be distributed in a manner likely to be generally approved.

I think there is hardly one of us—especially those, and they are very numerous in your Lordships' House, who are concerned with county administration—who is not aware that from time to time public libraries that had been set up by private effort, after living a more or less flourishing existence for a while, fall on troubled days and gradually disappear. There is no power in our rural districts, such as exists in our towns, of giving institutions of that kind that guarantee of permanence which is the consequence of their having the support behind them of a public body. It was believed, no doubt, by those who framed the original Public Libraries Act that the powers given would be largely adopted, but that was not so. They were adopted in boroughs and in urban districts, and gradually Parliament substituted in our boroughs and urban districts the action of the public local authority for the action of the ratepayers themselves, voting either by ballot or voting paper.

Now, the idea which underlies this Bill is that we should extend in some way or another to the county districts of England the same power which has been applied under the Acts of 1892 and 1893 to the boroughs and urban councils. But it does not follow, for the reasons just stated by my noble friend, if we approve of the object that necessarily we approve of the machinery of the Bill. I think everybody who has had to do with county administration knows that one of the difficulties is the cry that is very often raised against what is called centralisation in the county town, and what I am afraid of is that under the machinery of the Bill as it stands it will be exceedingly difficult for a county council to put the very machinery into operation which the Bill proposes to entrust to it, because it would be said that the county council was legislating for an area consisting of part of the county in regard to which it could not have such adequate information or such knowledge as would be possessed by the actual representatives of the locality. Under these circumstances my noble friend who represents this Department in your Lordships' House has made a suggestion which I cannot help hoping will go very far to meet both the views of my noble friend who has introduced this Bill and also the objections which have been urged.

Under the Act of 1892, as the House is aware, the vote of the ratepayers in a district, whether a borough or an urban district or a parish, was the final and determining factor, but it is very curious that immediately following the passage of that Act a most important Amendment was made by another Act; the vote of the urban council sitting as a representative assembly was substituted for the vote of the ratepayers, and that vote is practically final and determines the matter. What my noble friend has suggested is this, that the same power which Parliament gave a number of years ago to urban councils, and which I say, speaking from my own knowledge, has been exercised more and more as time goes on with excellent results, should be given to rural councils. If that were done it would meet one of the injustices of the present situation which was alluded to by my noble friend who preceded me in this debate—I mean that you have a library now set up in an urban district which is charged on the borough or urban rate, and the ratepayers of the surrounding districts get the benefit of that library without paying for it. If this arrangement were adopted, the borough and urban council would be able to say, "If we are to be asked to set up a library in our district, we must know what the rural council immediately surrounding us is going to do." In that manner I am inclined to think the suggestion made by my noble friend would be an exceedingly valuable one, because it would enable and encourage districts to combine together, and we should have this great and inestimable advantage, that we should be legislating on uniform lines.

As being connected myself with a rural district more than with any town, I ask why is the rural district council not to be treated with as much respect as the council of a small town. I think rural councils ought to be encouraged to come into line. I am quite willing to grant, however, that although I hold that view I think there is a sphere for the county council in this matter. Here again I would submit that the suggestions made by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries are perfectly in keeping with the general lines of our recent legislation on these matters. We cannot be too careful in trying to legislate upon recognisable lines, and not to increase that confusion from which local government in times past has so greatly suffered, and from which we are only slowly emerging.

Your Lordships are acquainted with the machinery and working of county councils, and are quite aware that gradually Parliament has enabled county councils to exercise a certain amount of control, and in certain cases also to contribute out of the county rate in aid of the expenses of the local authority. I believe there is no clause in the Local Government Act of 1888, which was passed by the Party opposite, which has been more useful or which has done more to improve our roads than the section which gives power to county councils to contribute to the improvements made by local authorities, not on main roads, but on their own local roads. In that way a county council has very often been able to say, "If you will do certain things which will cost so much, we will give you a proportion." In my own county we always contribute one-sixth to the cost of any approved improvement. I am inclined to think that it would be a great advantage if county councils were able to say to the smaller local authorities in their counties, "If you will act in a certain way in regard to these institutions we will come forward and help you in a moderate and reasonable manner." In this way, while throwing the main responsibility and chief cost on the locality benefiting, the county council might play a very useful part in encouraging a movement which I am bound to say I think is a very useful one.

I know myself how very frequently schoolmasters complain of the difficulty in keeping up their own education and in keeping their minds fresh, if I may use the expression, because when they go to out-of-the-way places it is impossible to get at any books, and I cannot help thinking that, especially in a year when in all probability the education question is going to occupy a large portion of the attention of Parliament, it is well that we should bear in mind that education often is greatly handicapped in our rural districts because of the difficulty referred to. The position of His Majesty's Government is this, that we sympathise with the object of my noble and learned friend, but we do not think the machinery of his Bill is very satisfactory. We cannot help hoping that he will consent to the whole question going to a Committee and these different alternatives being considered. I know from communications which have reached me and from my own experience that there is a real and genuine desire that something of this kind should be done.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I very gladly accept the proposal of my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. In fact, I do not feel myself in a position to refuse any reasonable offer of assistance. The suggestion of my noble friend merely carries out, as far as I can judge, the view I have before me. I would suggest that this debate should now be adjourned, and I will put upon the Paper a clause that I think can be carried. I will place it on the Paper before the debate on the Second Reading is resumed, and if it is agreed to it can be grafted on the Bill. Perhaps it would not be in order for me to move the adjournment of the debate, but I should be very glad if some noble Lord would do so for me.

LORD BURGHCLERE: I beg to move that the debate be adjourned.

Moved, "That the debate stand adjourned."—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

LORD BELPER: My Lords, with regard to procedure, I may perhaps be allowed to say one or two words. If the noble and learned Lord in charge of the Bill proposes to adjourn this debate in order that he may put new clauses into the Bill——

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Only one clause.

LORD BELPER: One clause would not enable the suggestions made by the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to be carried out. Then there were the further suggestions made by the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. At any rate, if it is attempted to deal with the matter in one clause, I hope sufficient time will be given for the consideration of that clause. My own view is that there ought to be a new Bill. The suggestions made on behalf of the Government can hardly be grafted on this Bill. Whatever is done, I hope that ample time will be given for the consideration of any fresh proposal by the County Councils Association

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON AND THE EARL OF HALSBURY both rose, the latter giving way for the Lord Privy Seal.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I am afraid my noble and learned friend cannot do exactly what he proposes. He cannot give notice of an Amendment until the Bill has been read a second time. According to the rules and practice of the House, notice of all Amendments must be given, and can only be given after the Bill has been read a second time.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: The noble Marquess has stated what I rose to say, and, therefore, there is no need for me to do more than endorse what he has said.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I cannot help thinking that the noble and learned Lord would be better advised if he withdrew this Bill and introduced a fresh one. There are plenty of opportunities in this House of getting a day for dealing with a Bill, and I certainly think that course would be the best one.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I gather that it is the feeling of the House that I should adopt the course suggested of withdrawing this Bill and introducing a new one. I therefore beg to withdraw the Bill, and I hope that every consideration will be extended to the new one which I shall introduce.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ALIENS ACT.

LORD NEWTON rose to call attention to the administration of the Aliens Act. The noble Lord said: My Lords, in calling attention to the administration of this Act I should like to remind the House that it was founded upon the Report of a Royal Commission presided over by my noble and learned friend Lord James of Hereford; that it was the principal measure of last session; that it was strongly, not to say bitterly, opposed in the other House; that it was carried by the closure; and that when it came up here, owing to circumstances which I need scarcely recall to the memory of the House, it was practically not debated at all; and, finally, I should like to point out that its administration depends very largely upon the views of the Home Secretary. I am not going to waste your Lordships' time in discussing the intentions of the Act, but I should like to insist upon the fact that very great pains were taken not to exclude any angels unawares, and every sort of precaution was adopted that refugees of the genuine type should not be excluded. I believe it is perfectly accurate to maintain that there has hardly been a case in which a genuine refugee has not been admitted. At any rate, there have been doubtful cases, and in each case the benefit of the doubt has been given on the side of the alien.

A very active campaign was conducted against this measure during its progress and after it became an Act, and a large number of allegations have been made against it, allegations which, as a matter of fact, have never been substantiated, and it is extremely difficult to reconcile the unfavourable opinions which have been expressed with regard to this Act, because there appears to be two views. One is the view that it is a grossly tyrannical measure which has excluded large numbers of deserving people from this country, and the other view is that it is such an extremely small and contemptible Act that it is hardly worth noticing at all. As a supporter of the former view, a Member of the other House who really ought to know better has distinguished himself by asserting a certain number of Russian deserters who were refused admission to this country, were returned to Russia, and were there executed.

I might point out that this is an extremely improbable assertion of itself, for, as everyone who knows Russia will admit, it is an extremely difficult task for anyone to get on board a Russian steamer without having proper papers, and therefore what happens is this: A Russian deserter almost invariably makes his way into Germany and embarks on a German steamer. It is from a German port that he arrives here, and it is obvious that if a deserter arrived in that way and was rejected he would return to Germany, and there would be no means of putting him to death, because there is no military convention between Russia and Germany. As, moreover, no sort of proof has ever been given with regard to this allegation, as it has further been denied by the Russian Government, and as the Foreign Office also professes entire ignorance on the subject, I really am inclined to think that I am perhaps paying too much honour to this Member of Parliament in alluding to his assertion at all.

Then, on the other hand as representing the other line of argument, we have the *Daily News* which has consistently poured contempt on the Act by showing how very few people have been affected by it in the sense of rejected aliens. I pass now to another organ—a paper called the *Manchester Guardian*—which has always been noted no less for its unrelenting hostility to the late Government than for its overpowering affection for aliens of all kinds, from Mad Mullahs downwards. This organ, recognising at once in the Aliens Act the lowest depths of political depravity, instituted an inquiry of its own into the working of the Act. I believe that this enterprising organ conducted a most painstaking inquiry, and at the end it was obliged to confess that the Act has been administered in a broadminded and even in a liberal spirit; and the Home Secretary himself has been compelled to admit that in some particulars at all events he has found it an extremely useful measure. If any further proof of the leniency of this Act were required it would be found in the fact that during the month of January only eighty-nine persons were refused admittance to this country, and owing to what I may call the extremely lenient and liberal character of the Act it will be readily admitted that these eighty-nine people must have been so undesirable in their nature that no civilised country would have tolerated their presence for a moment.

It is this liberal, lenient, and popular Act—for there is no doubt whatever as to its popularity in the country—whose chief defect appears to be that it does not go far enough, that the Home Secretary has set himself to emasculate, and this is easily performed by changing the object of one of the provisions of the Act and by altering one of the rules. I observe that the Home-Secretary, when challenged with having nullified the Act, pleaded in his defence that he had only altered one rule; just as a person who had a charge brought against him might excuse himself by saying he had "broken only one of the ten commandments." The alteration occurs with regard to Section 8, Subsection 2, which defines an immigrant ship as one which brings more than twenty alien passengers, "or such number as may be fixed by order of the Secretary of State."

When this Bill came up here last session I moved an Amendment to reduce the number from twenty to ten on the ground that possibly by the time the Act came into operation a Liberal Government might be in Office, and that it was, therefore, rather dangerous to entrust an unsympathetic Secretary of State with so much latitude. I therefore urged—and, of course, urged unsuccessfully—that it would be safer to reduce the number from twenty to ten. My noble friend Lord Belper, who was in charge of the Bill in this House, and who, naturally, would have nothing to do with my Amendment, because, however excellent it might have been, there was no time to carry it, replied to me as follows, showing that extreme and almost child-like confidence in his successor which one occasionally encounters amongst experienced Ministers, viz.—

> "The Government were aware that if the number was rigidly fixed at twenty the provision in the Bill might be avoided by shipowners bringing in less than twenty aliens. That was the reason why special power was given to the Secretary of State to vary the number if found desirable. He did not entertain intense distrust of the Secretary of State in this matter."

If I were of a conceited disposition I should be inclined to boast that on this occasion I had proved myself an absolutely correct prophet, or at any rate, far more so than my noble friend.

What happened? A Departmental Committee was formed for the purpose of making the rules in question; and, after a long and careful inquiry, the number was reduced from twenty to twelve, and I am informed that even this number of twelve was found to be too high, and that many opportunities were thereby afforded of evading the Act. I observed that only a fortnight ago the members of the London Immigration Board met at the Guildhall and unanimously agreed to recommend that the number should be reduced from twelve to five. The reply of the Home Secretary to that is to increase the number to twenty. In view of this fact I think it is quite clear that we are entitled to have the Report which I have alluded to—it cannot possibly be confidential, for there cannot be anything secret about it—and to know the reasons which have influenced the Secretary of State in making this important change.

So much with regard to the alteration of the rules. The other question to which I shall briefly refer is the action of the Home Secretary with reference to the circumstances under which the aliens are allowed to land. Clause 1 is the clause which deals with the power to prevent the landing of undesirable immigrants. Sub-section 3 reads as follows—

> "But in the case of an immigrant who proves that he is seeking admission to this country solely to avoid persecution or punishment on religious or political grounds leave to land shall not be refused on the ground merely of want of means or the probability of his becoming a charge on the rates."

I should like to explain that the machinery by which this Act is carried out consists of immigration officers and immigration boards. The immigration officers are under the control of the Home Office; the immigration boards are not. The immigration officer is really the important person, because he is the person who gives the order for admittance or rejection, and, if he refuses, then the board comes into play.

The action of the Home Secretary has been as follows: He sent a letter of advice to the boards, over whom he has no control at all, as to how he considers the Act ought to be interpreted. To the immigration officers, who are under his control, he sent a letter of instructions, or, I think it is more correct to say, a letter containing orders, and they are to this effect: that in all cases in which immigrants coming from parts of the Continent which are in a disturbed condition claim that they are flying from persecution, they should have the benefit of the doubt when any doubt exists, and leave to land must be given. Now, supposing my noble friend behind me, the Duke of Bedford, as President of the Zoological Society, were to issue a letter of advice to the council suggesting that impecunious persons might, under certain conditions, be admitted into the gardens, and at the same time wrote to the men at the turn-stiles saying that everyone was to be allowed in who asserted that he had not got the necessary funds. That is what it comes to. Taking this view of the matter, the function of the Immigration Board becomes an absolute farce. The board does not come into play at all. The alien is to be admitted, according to the instructions given to the immigration officer, and therefore the board might, so far as I can see, almost as well not exist.

The principle of the clause, as it was intended to act, was that the alien had to prove that he was a refugee. Now, the onus of proof is thrown on the immigration officer, who before he can refuse admission has to prove that the would-be immigrant is not a refugee, and he naturally is perfectly incapable of proving anything of the kind. It is perfectly obvious that doubt must always exist. Considerable doubt must exist as to what countries may fairly be described as being in a disturbed condition. Turkey, for intance, might be described as in a permanently disturbed condition. The Balkan States can be described as being periodically in a disturbed condition. Austria-Hungary is in a temporarily disturbed condition. In France there is a disturbed condition arising through conflict between the State and the Church; and Russia may be said to be indefinitely disturbed. To realise the absurdity of the way in which the Act must work try to imagine, if you can, an impecunious Briton being permitted to land in the United States on the ground that he was a victim of religious or political persecution, and it then transpiring that he was a passive resister or a conscientious objector. On one of these guileless refugees was found a letter telling him to say he had been lying hid in a cellar, that he had seen a number of men butchered, but that he was to conceal the fact that the £5 on him was borrowed.

By the altering of this provision the Act has been rendered little better than a farce. I learn from a newspaper that over 1,000 aliens have landed in London during the last ten days, and that in not one single case was any objection made and not a single appeal taken to the Immigration Board. We stand, in short, almost exactly as we did before the Act was passed, and the only thing that remains of any value apparently is the deportation of aliens after they have been brought to justice. I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything more on the subject. All this talk about the sacred rights of asylum being violated is little better than mere rubbish. It is perfectly clear that there is no grievance of that kind at all. What the object of His Majesty's Government can be in encouraging large numbers of aliens to come to this country, when, according to their own statement, between 12,000,000 and 13,000,000 of English people are on the verge of starvation under the blessings of free trade, is beyond my comprehension. Neither can I see how effective action can be taken on my part against the majority of 300 in another place. But if this Act is nullified, let us be perfectly clear as to how it has happened, and who is responsible for it.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down has taken the most unusual course in this House of confining his remarks entirely to the Motion of which he had given notice, and I shall hope to follow that admirable example. I should like to express my sympathy with one criticism he made of the Act itself, as to the defects from which it undoubtedly suffers, owing to the fact that it received no amendment while in your Lordships' House. I am sure that he will agree with me that, under these circumstances, the Act has not reached that standard of perfection which we expect from an Act upon which your Lordships have exercised your power of revision. The noble Lord seemed to have been misled by the extravagances of the halfpenny Press, of which, I confess, I am not so great a student as he is. But with regard to the 1,000 aliens who, he says, have been landed in London during the last ten days, I should like to point out that he makes no reference to those who were transmigrants and were going on to other countries. The figures of the noble Lord are unofficial, and cannot be accepted as correct. As to the actual administration of the Act itself, I may point out that the Act came into operation on the 1st January, and it was necessary that certain rules and regulations should be made before that date. The regulations were drawn up in the Home Office, but the late Secretary of State left the Office without signing them and they were signed as they stood by my right hon. friend the present Secretary of State, who does not, I think, accept any responsibility with regard to them as they stood at that time. It is interesting to point out to your Lordships the full figures with regard to the refusals which took place under the rules and regulations sanctioned, though not technically signed, by Mr. Akers-Douglas. In addition to the eighty-nine refusals in the month of January there were only fifty refusals in the month of February, so that the total number of refusals under the Aliens Act, which we were told was going to exclude such large numbers of people from competition in the home market, only amounted to 139. If that was continued throughout the year it would not have amounted to anything like a large number. The figures with regard to March are not available, but, in consequence of certain religious festivals which occur at the early part of the month, it is probable that there will not be a large number of refusals owing to the number of Jews travelling being much smaller than in January and February.

With regard to the new regulations, they in no way interfere with what is considered by many people to be the most important part of the Act, the exclusion of those whom noble Lords on both sides of the House wish to see excluded, the criminal or diseased alien. Nothing in these regulations will interfere with their exclusion. There were three new regulations issued by the Secretary of State in addition to those which, as I have said, were drafted by Mr. Akers-Douglas. The first one had reference to the admission of the Press, and I think that on this matter, while there is any difficulty in getting at the facts, it is exceedingly valuable that we should, with the help of the Press, be able to know exactly what takes place.

Then, with regard to the second regulation, I might perhaps read to your Lordships part of the letter from the Secretary of State to the Immigration Board—

> "The Act was passed for the purpose of checking the immigration of undesirable aliens. Parliament, in the judgment of the Secretary of State, never intended that in the administration for that object of the provisions of the Act they should be applied with a rigidity which excludes consideration as to whether refusal of leave to land would involve great personal hardship or suffering in the case of women or children. Again, the statements of a man claiming to be a political or religious refugee may be insufficient or inaccurate, yet he may be exposed to serious risk from political causes if he is forced to return. Though the Secretary of State recognises that the absence of corroborative evidence frequently makes it difficult for the board to come to a decision, he hopes that, having regard to the present disturbed condition of certain parts of the Continent, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, may be given in favour of any immigrants who allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution in such districts."

I ask noble Lords opposite if they wish that the benefit of the doubt should not be given to those aliens who come here and say they are flying from religious or political persecution, and I should be glad to take the parallel case with regard to the Zoological Gardens. If the noble Duke who is President of the Zoological Society found that a number of children who had never had a chance of seeing the gardens, who had never had the chance of enjoying a day's liberty, who came from the slums, and who the noble Duke knew on their return to their homes without having been admitted to the Zoological Gardens ran the risk of being severely beaten or badly treated—in those circumstances there is no member of your Lordships' House who would not appove of the action of the noble Duke in allowing them to enter the gardens. The noble Lord also referred to the statements which were made by Mr. Rothschild. Mr. Rothschild is no supporter of His Majesty's Government, and I think the noble Lord had better settle that matter with Mr. Rothschild himself.

The third regulation to which I have to draw attention raised the number of aliens from twelve to twenty. Twenty is the number in the Act itself. I do not know that it is necessary for any member of His Majesty's Government to defend the selection of that number by the late Secretary of State. Twenty was the number in the Act, and I think I may safely leave the defence of that number to the noble Lord my predecessor who is, I am glad to see, in the House this afternoon. But I should like to say that one reason which I believe actuated the Secretary of State in raising the number from twelve to twenty, was to relieve the pressure on the immigrant ports. The vast majority of the ports in this country have not got immigration boards, and ships which came to non-immigrant ports having fewer than twelve immigrants of course passed in freely. If they had more they were subject to this Act, and had to go round to one of the ports at which the machinery established under this Act was in existence. After only two months experience of this Act the Home Office found that more than one case of hardship had arisen, and there were real reasons why the number should be altered.

I will give your Lordships two instances of the way in which this Act did press hardly on foreigners coming into this country. There was the case of the French onion sellers who arrived at a non-immigrant port. As there were more than twelve of them on board the ship there was a great deal of difficulty as to their admission to this country to carry on a trade to which none of us have any objection at all. There was another case in which a number of Scandinavian sailors came to this country in order that they might join certain ships which were lying in non-immigrant ports. Under the order it would have been impossible for them to join their ships unless they had gone round to one of the Tyneside ports and travelled from there by train to the port where the ships were lying which they were to join. Under these circumstances, I do not think that it is very easy to blame the Secretary of State for doing what after all is only a matter of detail and not one of principle, and fixing the number at twenty, which His Majesty's late Government themselves thought should be the number necessary to make a ship an immigrant ship. In conclusion, I only desire to quote to your Lordships a statement that was made in the House of Commons the other day by the Solicitor-General in the late Government. Sir E. Carson said—

> "So far as he could see there was no justice in the allegation that the rules and recommendations of the right hon. Gentleman had in any way interfered with the Act of Parliament. Therefore, the only matter in which there might be ground for criticism seemed to be taken away if they looked at the thing fairly and honestly, because all that the Home Secretary had done was to bring to the minds of the immigration officers a sense of their duty. As the right hon. Gentleman was going to give the Act fair play it was only right that he should have a fair chance."

I am quite unable to add anything to those admirable sentiments of Sir Edward Carson.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I confess I do not think this matter ought to be treated in the somewhat light manner in which it has been treated. If the Secretary of State has issued the directions that I understand he has issued, I think it is a most serious and important question, and one of far greater importance than the particular matter with which we are dealing, because if it was once supposed that an Act of Parliament deliberately passed by the Legislature could be set aside by indirect means at the direction of the Secretary of State, the mischief of such a proposition would extend far beyond the particular controversy we are now engaged upon. I understand that what the Secretary of State said was this—

> "I have issued to all the immigration officers instructions that in all cases in which immigrants coming from ports of the Continent which are at present in a disturbed condition, allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists as to the truth of the allegation, must be allowed and leave to land must be given."

I venture to say that the action of the Home Secretary is contrary to the Act of Parliament. The Statute itself contains an express direction. I do not think there is any doubt what the language can mean. Happily it is not a question of doubtful law; it is the ordinary application of the English language, and I venture to think that the words in the Act are not susceptible of doubt.

After the general proposition that an undesirable alien shall not be permitted to land, the statute proceeds thus—

> "But in the case of an immigrant who proves that he is seeking admission to this country solely to avoid persecution or punishment on religious or political grounds . . . . leave to land shall not be refused."

The Act of Parliament contains an express direction that the intending immigrant shall "prove" that he is seeking admission solely to avoid persecution or punishment on political or religious grounds. The good sense of that is obvious enough. What can the immigration officer know about the facts, and whether or not a man is flying from persecution? Of course, if the man offers no proof it can always be said that the matter is in doubt, and, according to the Secretary of State's instructions to his subordinates, leave to land must be given.

I do not know what the facts were that were put before my very distinguished and learned friend Sir Edward Carson, but it is astonishing to me that a lawyer of his eminence should say that the express direction of the statute was satisfied by a mere allegation that the man was flying from persecution; and I can only suppose that a particular and partial view had been placed before my learned friend when he made his statement in another place. The whole subject is one of a far more serious character than appears to be imagined. The question here is whether the Secretary of State has taken upon himself to disobey the law; whether a state of law has been created by the Secretary of State's directing persons under his command to disobey the Act of Parliament. I have not the least desire to treat harshly any awkward phrase, and I sympathise with the position of a Gentleman like the present Secretary of State for the Home Department who is not himself a lawyer, and must more or less rely upon the advice given to him; but I want to know if the words I have quoted accurately state the directions he has given to his subordinates. If so, I should like to know from any lawyer whether he can reconcile these two things; and, if he cannot, it appears to me that respect for the law has not been observed.

The action of the Home Secretary in directing the immigration officers under his control deliberately to disobey the Act of Parliament in this way seems to me a much more serious and grievous infraction of the law than the slight inadvertence in connection with the whipping of the Chinese in South Africa of which we have heard so much during the last twenty-four hours. I speak always with reserve on such a subject. I have not got the words of the directions to the immigration officers. I only gather what they were from a report, which may not be accurate, of a statement in the other House of Parliament; but, if the words are as reported, I say, as a lawyer, that there cannot be the slightest doubt that the directions so given are contrary to the Act of Parliament and constitute an outrage upon the ordinary observance of the law.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: My Lords, if I desired to give a merely debating reply to the noble and learned Earl who has just addressed your Lordships I might be content with pointing out to him that it is highly improbable that the Solicitor-General of the very Government of which he himself was so great an ornament should have committed himself in his place in Parliament to the approval of the action of the Home Secretary of the present Government without adequate and full consideration. But, my Lords, I feel that it would be hardly respectful on my part to the noble and learned Earl if I were to confine myself to what I have called a merely debating answer. Therefore I propose to say a few words upon the general question which has been brought forward by my noble friend opposite, and I shall allude more particularly to what has fallen from the noble and learned Earl.

The Home Secretary has, in the first place, been accused of gross inconsistency. He has been told that whereas upon one of the earliest days on which Parliament met he spoke favourably of the operation of this Act, a very short time after, under the pressure, it was alleged, of excited and fiery speeches made outside and articles written in newspapers, he altered his position and climbed down from what he had said before. In that matter I desire to say—and it is my duty, I think, to allude to this part of the question—that nothing could possibly be more unfair than that charge against the Home Secretary, because the portion of the Bill of which he spoke favourably was not the portion which has been discussed in your Lordships' House to-night. and which was discussed subsequently in the House of Commons, but another clause of the Bill, namely, Section 3, which is generally known as the "expulsion of undesirable aliens clause," which everyone will agree is a most desirable and excellent clause.

I feel how almost absurd it is for me, following the noble and learned Earl, to allude to a legal issue, but if so humble a person as a chairman of quarter sessions may be allowed to refer to a legal matter, I may say that I have before now had before me as prisoners foreigners who had committed a long series of skilful crimes, and I unhesitatingly say that I have long wished that legislation of this kind had been passed so that a Judge or chairman of quarter sessions might be able to add to an ordinary sentence a sentence of expulsion or deportation. It was that portion of the Act to which the Home Secretary was alluding, and I hope that, whatever difference of opinion there may be with regard to the operation of the rest of this Act, on the value of that clause we are all agreed.

But in reality it is not that clause which has excited the feeling that has caused this debate. It is the principal clause of the Act—Clause 1—and more particularly that clause which relates to what is popularly called the right of asylum. It is not, perhaps, for me, not having been then a Member of your Lordships' House, to express an opinion, but I do think it was a matter of regret that last year the Amendments which I understand were actually placed upon the Table by the Members of the then Government were not proceeded with, because it would have given an opportunity to this House, in Committee, to consider the various points that had been raised. Nobody, I think, whatever his opinion may be on the general question, and the noble Lord who brought forward this matter did not go beyond general views, can deny that the wording of this Act is in many respects most unfortunate. If ever there was a case where the power of your Lordships' House as a chamber of revision over the work of the House of Commons might have been wisely and judiciously exercised, this was one which particularly called for such action on your part. However, it is too late to lament over that; but, nevertheless, we must bear this in mind, that the Home Office have been called upon to administer an exceedingly difficult Act of Parliament dealing with a most delicate subject and one full of legal pitfalls.

I am sure no Member of your Lordships' House, whatever his opinion may be, will deny that the right of political asylum is a matter to be spoken of with the greatest respect, to be dealt with with the greatest care, and not to be treated in any manner cavalierly. One criticism of my noble friend's speech would be, I think, that he treated this question a little too cavalierly and lightly, that he did not quite sufficiently realise the depth of feeling and thorough honesty which I claim for those who fought hard to defend what we believed, and what we believe now, to be one of the most cherished institutions of this country—the right of asylum. I do not hesitate to say that in your Lordships' House, because this right has been largely the creation of your Lordships' House. If you were to go back to such chapters of our history as the asylum which was given to Protestant refugees, to the Huguenots and others who came at different times to this country, the part played by your Lordships' House would bear comparison to that of any other body in the country, and therefore I claim that this House is just as much the guardian of this valuable and historic right of asylum which we have inherited as the House of Commons itself. The noble and learned Earl has asked that the Government should inform him as to what really has been the action of the Home Secretary in this matter.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: The actual language of the directions to the immigration officers.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: The distinction is perfectly clear, if I may say so, between the position of the Home Secretary with reference to the immigration officers in the ports, who are practically his own officers, and the immigration boards. With regard to the first, I am advised that the power of the Home Secretary is undoubted to give such directions as he has given, and those directions to the immigration officers are—

> "In all cases in which immigrants coming from parts of the Continent which are at present in a disturbed condition allege that they are flying from political or religious persecution, the benefit of the doubt, where any doubt exists, as to the truth of the allegation, will be allowed and leave to land will be given."

Those are the directions to the immigration officers. With regard to the immigration boards, the language of the Home Secretary is that of advice only. I am quite willing to communicate the full text if necessary, though in regard to that I understand from the noble and learned Earl that he would take no objection. But in this connection I am convinced, and I feel here that I may appeal to the noble Earl as one of the greatest legal authorities in this country, that if he will look at the use of the word "prove" in the proviso to Section 1 he will acknowledge that the peculiar use of that word in that direction opens up a great vista of legal difficulties. In terms the Act requires the alien immigrant to prove that he is a refugee. Obviously this would mean strict legal proof. Under the circumstances this would be impossible. Neither the immigration officer nor the immigration board is a court. They have no power to administer an oath, so obviously the proof required cannot be legal proof in the strict sense of the term.

I urged on the Government last year in another place that these courts should be open courts, and conducted as Courts of Law. As a matter of fact, I foresaw the difficulties which would arise, and I placed an Amendment on the Paper in which I took the actual words of the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879, which was passed by the noble and learned Earl and his colleagues, and under which all Petty Sessional courts are open courts and held in public places. I desired to assimilate the functions and jurisdiction of these courts of immigration. If that Amendment had been adopted I venture to think that none of these difficulties would have arisen. Immigrant ships arrive at all hours, and the examinations often taken place before the immigration officers in the dark, and on board ship, and in estimating what is meant by proof the conditions under which the examination is conducted must be taken into account.

The only possible evidence available is the statement of the alien, taken in conjunction with the probabilities of the case. If an alien states that he is a political refugee, and if it appears from the paper which he fills up and signs that he comes from a disturbed part of the Continent, the presumption is that his statement is correct, and the onus of proof is shifted, as the onus of proof is so often shifted in legal matters. The state of certain parts of Russia is a matter of common knowledge. The direction of the Home Secretary that an alien alleging himself to be a refugee is to have the benefit of the doubt is, I may also point out, confined to aliens who apparently come from disturbed parts of Europe, and therefore it would have no application to an alien alleging himself to be a Russian, but arriving in England from a place where there is no disturbance. The statement has been made that in this matter the Home Secretary has not acted in a statesmanlike or judicial manner, but according to the dictates of his inner conscience. Nothing could be further from the mind or the intention of the Home Secretary, and I claim that as he has received in Parliament approbation of his action from the Solicitor-General of the late Government, we stand on exceedingly good ground even when we have to meet so formidable an antagonist as the noble and learned Earl opposite.

I wish that I could stop my argument at the point that I have reached, but I would not be doing my duty, as representing the Foreign Office in this House, if I attempted to conceal from your Lordships that there is another aspect of this question. The Home Secretary was exposed, before he issued these amended regulations, to the attacks of those who suggested that he was indifferent to the right of asylum, and to the attacks of those who sympathised especially with all those complicated movements which at this moment are disturbing so many parts of the world. But there is another aspect of this question and quite as serious a one. I remember the late Sir William Harcourt used to be very fond of laughing at what he called grandmotherly legislation—the covering of the Statute Books with unnecessary laws which did no good and which often worked out in directions which no one expected, and created difficulties which no one foresaw. If I had to criticise this Act again I should renew the criticism I ventured to make upon it last year. This Act is creating difficulties of quite a different kind from those we have so far heard of, and it would not be right of me to leave entirely the brunt of the attack which has come from the other side to the defence of my noble friend who represents the Home Office, because there is a Foreign Office side to this question.

I alluded just now to the fact that I thought it unfortunate that the Amendments which your Lordships placed on the Paper were never brought forward. I remember that when the Bill was discussed on Second Reading Lord Spencer, whose absence and its cause we all so deeply regret, asked what was the real meaning of sub-section (a) of section 1. And that really is the Act, or rather it is the fighting part of the Act around which all these controversies have arisen. We pressed for an explanation as to what was meant by the words—

> "A person having the means decently to support himself and his family."

If a man arrived whose arms were strong, whose legs were strong, whose digestion was good, whose head was clear, and who happened not to have £5 in his pocket, was that man, we asked, to be rejected on the ground that he had not the means to decently support himself? And was a man of doubtful health and whose constitution was undermined to be admitted merely because he had borrowed £5 from someone? We were unable to get an answer to those questions. But when the Bill was discussed in your Lordships' House the Government said that under those circumstances the man would not be excluded. My noble friend the present First Lord of the Admiralty expressed the same doubts which Mr. Asquith and Sir Charles Dilke have expressed in the House of Commons. He said he hoped there would be an opportunity of clearing the matter up in Committee, and no doubt it might have been cleared up in Committee, but your Lordships never had the opportunity. Owing to words of such dangerous legal laxity being used, I am sorry to say that troubles have arisen frequently, and are likely, I am afraid, to recur, quite apart from the question of Russian refugees or persons arriving in a verminous state. They are arising at these ports in regard to persons whom I am perfectly certain the late Government never intended to be annoyed under this Act.

I do not for a moment insinuate that any of these evil results came within the minds of noble Lords opposite; but although the Act has been in operation only a few weeks the Foreign Office continues to receive a great number of complaints in regard to the inequalities and the injustices, and, indeed, in some cases almost the cruelties, which arise in some instances under the Act. We have had complaints from Norway in regard to fishermen, whalers, workmen and others who come to this country on temporary jobs, and into whose occupation uncertainty has been introduced. We have had complaints also from Norway in regard to fish packers and others engaged in industries which bring them temporarily to this country, and bring them very often with not a penny in their pockets, and the immigration board have considered it their duty to subject them to all the inconveniences of examination and the delays under the Act. We had the case, to which publicity has been given in the newspapers, of ship-wrecked Americans. Ship-wrecked men have in all ages been the special object of protection; but it was found to be the duty of the immigration board to deal in an exceedingly harsh manner with these Americans, and the American Consul had to intervene to get them out of durance vile and had to guarantee a certain sum of money out of his own pocket before the men were released. Then there was the case of the French onion dealers.

I am not here to pass censure on the immigration boards. They have done their very best to administer the Act judiciously, fairly, and in a sympathetic spirit, but they are in an unfortunate position. They are not a court of law and have none of the machinery which a court of law has to extract evidence and to test it. They have not, like petty sessions, an experienced chairman and clerk to advise them. Therefore I do not attack them if, in administering the Act, they have been, here and there, in pursuance of the Act, the unintentional means of inflicting hardship on people; but that hardship has been inflicted there can be no doubt. We are in the region of the unexpected. We at the Foreign Office have no security from day to day that we shall not have complaints, unofficial complaints as yet, but nevertheless complaints which cause discontent, and which, if they are allowed to go on, may in some cases in the end cause serious trouble.

There was one particularly touching and painful case. It was the case in January in which two French girls of good position, belonging to families in France perfectly well known, were concerned. They were returning to England, one of them as a governess in a school and the other as a pupil, and they were subjected to such delays and annoyances at Folkstone—they were detained on the boat, then bundled on shore to be examined—that they were almost wild with terror, and the younger girl, twelve years of age, arrived in London in a condition almost dying with cold and hunger. I do not want to exaggerate, but owing to the unexpected operation of this Act of Parliament, which was placed on the Statute Book in a desperate hurry, we live at the Foreign Office from day to day in fear that we may have fresh additions to these complaints. Therefore, I do earnestly pray that my noble friend, who has himself taken an honourable part in diplomacy in former days, and other noble Lords will realise our difficulties, and not regard this as a high-handed attempt by the Home Secretary to override an Act of Parliament.

I feel that we have a full right to call upon noble Lords opposite to give us their assistance, because they themselves were parties to placing upon the Statute Book this Act of Parliament, not in precisely that accurate language, or in that final condition, which they themselves desired. I have to say, in conclusion, with regard to that aspect of the question which more particularly refers to the office I have the honour to represent in this House, that in view of the cases—I have not desired to take up too much of your Lordships' time by referring to others—which I have alluded to, and the fear we have that others like them may arise, it is my duty not to conceal from the House that if, under the new rules and practice introduced by the Home Office, it is not found possible to escape the inconvenience and the complicated controversies which arose immediately on the Act coming into operation, it may become necessary, in the interests of justice and of our good relations with foreign countries, to ask for an Amendment of the Act; and I make that statement with the full authority of the Secretary of State.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has given us a most interesting speech about the weather in January, shipwrecked mariners and onion sellers, in whom he appears to be very much interested. But what he said had really nothing whatever to do with the speech of my noble friend, who introduced this subject this evening, and very little to do with the speech of the noble and learned Earl the late Lord Chancellor. My noble friend who spoke first for the Government, and the noble Lord who has just sat down, took a somewhat unusual course in their statement of the Government's case this evening. They have both alluded at great length to things which happened in the other House of Parliament. Your Lordships are generally tolerant, I know, as to what speakers say, and no one has enjoyed that tolerance more than I have; but if your Lordships have permitted noble Lords opposite to refer to what was said by Sir Edward Carson in the other House of Parliament, I would ask you to allow me to remind you under what circumstances his statement was made.

The subject came on in the House of Commons, and the Secretary of State for the Home Department made exactly the same defence as was made by my noble friend Lord Beauchamp. He talked about the immigration boards, but said not one word about the immigration officers. That is our whole case. We have no objection to the letter addressed to the immigration boards. We have the strongest possible objection to the instructions issued to the immigration officers; and my learned friend Sir Edward Carson, as I understand, got up after the speech of the Secretary of State for the Home Department and said that he thought his course had been perfectly correct. That was agreed. Nobody objects to what has been written by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to the immigration boards.

My noble and learned friend behind me, Lord Halsbury, put a legal Question which I think merits an Answer from some legal Member of His Majesty's Government. I say this in no disparaging spirit of the noble Lord. Can you tell us straight that in your opinion the word "must," which occurs in the instructions to the immigration officers, is not contrary to the spirit of the Act of Parliament, which placed the onus of proof on the immigrant? That is the keynote of our contention, and that Question has not been answered by any legal Member of your Lordships' House, though there are legal Members opposite both in the Government and supporting the Government. I do not wish to say any more in enforcing that point. Is the word "must" in strict conformity with the Act of Parliament?

EARL BEAUCHAMP: The word "must" does not occur anywhere in the Order.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I am extremely glad to hear it; but it occurs twice in the Home Secretary's Answer given in the House of Commons.

LORD FITZMAURICE: I read the actual document to the House just now. The word "must" is not in it. The words are "will be allowed."

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: Is there really very much difference? Where any doubt exists as to the truth of the allegation, leave to land "will" be given to the immigrant. The Secretary of State says to his subordinates that leave will be given. It is exactly the same thing. I am much obliged to noble Lords opposite for their correction, and I repeat the Question which has been put to them by the noble and learned Earl behind me. The concluding remarks of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs contained an announcement, upon the obtaining of which I congratulate my noble friend behind me. The noble Lord suggested that it may be necessary to amend this Act. I wonder if he means, so far as this particular point is concerned, to repeal it. It is because we have been suspecting that the Government have all along intended to repeal it, but that in this particular case they have not taken the course of introducing a repealing Act, but have altered the regulations, that we have felt it right to make a solemn protest against what has been done. I hope we shall have a straight answer to the legal point raised by my noble and learned friend behind me.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, I should have had the greatest pleasure in rising immediately after the noble and learned Earl, who asked a legal Question, had I had an opportunity of considering this point more fully. In point of fact, I had no notice that this legal Question was going to be brought forward, and I do not think it is possible or right for me, after hearing words read out from instructions that I have never seen, in reference to an Act which I do not know by heart, to offer a legal opinion on the merits of these matters. I shall, however, have the greatest pleasure in giving such opinion after I have had an opportunity of looking into them.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, after what has fallen from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, of course the House will wait with respect and anxious patience to hear his interpretation of the word "prove." I merely rise to ask one or two Questions with regard to matters of fact which I do not think have been answered. A few moments ago, Lord Beauchamp, and, I think, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, both said that the word "must" was not used in Mr. Gladstone's instructions to the immigration officers. I have in my hand a copy, verified by Mr. Gladstone's private secretary, of the words he used in the debate, and they run as follows—

> "Finally, I have issued to all the immigration officers instructions that in all cases in which immigrants coming from ports of the Continent which are at present in a disturbed condition allege that they are flying from religious or political persecution, and if there is a doubt, where any doubt exists as to the truth of the allegation it must be allowed, and leave to land must be given."

Therefore, my Lords, there is no doubt whatever that Mr. Gladstone's order in that respect to the immigration officers was most peremptory. I wish to ask Lord Beauchamp whether he will lay on the Table the Report of the Committee. All that has been said to-night by way of explanation of this alteration is that it was made owing to a difficulty with some onion sellers and certain Scandinavian seamen who were going to join their ships

LORD FITZMAURICE: I did not say that at all. On the contrary, I said that that part of my observations was entirely opening up a different chapter from that which had led to the alteration. I pointed out that Mr. Gladstone in another place had had to reply to attacks directed mainly by friends of these immigrants who claimed to be political refugees, and when I brought forward these other cases I was putting before your Lordships a chapter of events which I myself said was quite different.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I accept the explanation. In that case we have had no reason given to us why the number was changed from twelve to twenty.

LORD FITZMAURICE: That was stated by my noble friend Lord Beauchamp.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Then it was Lord Beauchamp who spoke about the onion sellers and the Scandinavian seamen.

LORD FITZMAURICE: No; I referred to them.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Lord Beauchamp, so far, has given us no other reason except that of these unfortunate men. What we want to know is the reason why the number was changed to twenty. We want to see the documents and the advice which Mr. Gladstone received when he made that change, because, whatever may have been his reasons, and however good they may have been, the result has been most unfortunate. The Act is now made absolutely inoperative by the increase of the number to twenty. I shall be very glad to know if we are to have that Report.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I do not wish to prolong this discussion for more than a few minutes, but there were some remarks made by the noble Earl opposite to which I cannot help referring. I am not at all surprised that the noble Earl should object on this occasion to references to what passed in the House of Commons, because no doubt the speech of Sir Edward Carson is an extremely awkward one for those who take the same line as the noble Earl. There may be some irregularities in these allusions, though they are constantly made in this House. It is the practice, when these things have passed into the pages of *Hansard*, constantly to allude to them. I think it would be impossible to carry on debates in both Houses of Parliament on the strict rule that neither House should refer to proceedings which had taken place in the other.

I say it with all respect, but I do not think the noble Earl quite gave a fair account of what Sir Edward Carson said. We laymen are placed in a position of great difficulty when we find such eminent lawyers as the late Lord-Chancellor and the late Solicitor-General taking entirely different views of this subject. I find, on reference to *Hansard*, that Sir Edward Carson in the debate said that when a Question was put on the matter to the Home Secretary on the previous night he, from only a cursory examination, formed the opinion that the right hon. Gentleman was, by the powers conferred upon him, interfering with the Statute passed in the previous session; but that having heard the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman he found that he had come to an absolutely erroneous conclusion in that respect. It is therefore obvious that Sir Edward Carson had considered the subject very carefully, and felt himself bound to admit that he had, in the first instance, formed a judgment he now believed to be erroneous. The noble Earl said that Sir Edward Carson made no allusion to the circular issued to the immigation officers. But Sir Edward's language on this point was very remarkable. He said—

> "The Home Secretary had told the immigration officers that in the cases in which they were in any doubt as to whether an alien was a political or a religious refugee, they ought to give him the benefit of the doubt. He (Sir Edward Carson) himself would have thought that that was the duty of the immigration officers without any instructions whatever. That was an ordinary rule in the administration of Acts of Parliament."

That is a pretty strong opinion upon the very point which the noble Earl seemed to think Sir Edward Carson had given no opinion at all. I therefore venture to say that whatever weight we are to give to the opinion of the late Solicitor-General, we are entitled to claim him as an undoubted witness in favour of the legal correctness of the conduct of my right hon. friend, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, in the matter.

LORD NEWTON: I should like to press for a Reply to my Question as to the production of the Report. Are we to have the Report?

EARL BEAUCHAMP: No. The Home Secretary in another place has already refused, on principle, to lay on the Table a confidential document from a Committee of the Department. He has, however, laid on the Table the rules and orders and also a memorandum on the working of the Act, which contains the gist of the Committee's Report. The Report itself will not be laid, largely because it contains certain references to salary to be paid to people and other matters of that kind.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Then how are we to learn the reasons which induced the Secretary of State to change his mind?

EARL BEAUCHAMP: I have done my best to state those reasons to the House to-night.

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 22nd March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 66 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Reports from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders 66 and 67 have not been complied with, viz:—Cork Link Railways Bill; Cork and Waterford Railways Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Millwall Dock Bill; North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 2).

Sir John Dickson Poynder reported from the Committee on Group 2 of Railway and Canal Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday, 24th April, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Dowlais Gas Bill; Merthyr Tydfil Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A).

Mr. H. J. Tennant reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills; That Mr. F. W. Verney, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Mr. H. J. Tennant reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Cork City Railways and Works Bill, Report [20th March] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Acts relating to the Milford Docks Company to extend the time limited for the completion of certain works; to enable the Company to acquire lands compulsorily; and for other purposes." [Milford Docks Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the capital of the Crystal Palace Company and to empower them to raise additional capital." [Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for authorising the Kidderminster Gas Light and Coke Company to alter their name, to construct new gas works, to provide for the conversion and consolidation of certain of their existing capital, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Kidderminster Bas Bill [Lords.]

Milford Docks Bill [Lords]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Abercarn; Abersychan; Abertillery; Abram; Airdie; Alloa; Altrincham; Alva; Alyth; Anglesey; Annfield; Annan; Anstruther; Easter; Arbuthnot; Ardrossan; Arklow; Arlecdon and Frizington; Armagh; Ashton in Makerfield; Ashton-under-Lyne; Aspull;

Auchterarder (two); Auchtergaven; Ayr; Balbriggan; Balfron; Ballybay; Ballycastle; Ballymena; Baltinglass; Banbridge; Bandon; Barmouth; Barrowford; Barrow-upon-Soar; Barry; Barton-upon-Humber; Bathgate; Battersea; Beckenham; Bedwellty; Belfast; Belford; Benholm; Billesdon; Billinge; Bingley; Birkenhead; Birstall; Blackburn; Blackford; Blaenavon; Blairgowrie (two); Blantyre; Blaydon; Bodmin; Bolton; Bolton-upon-Dearne; Bonhill; Bothwell; Bournemouth; Bower; Bradford (two); Bray; Brechin; Brecknock; Bridlington; Brighouse; Briton Ferry; Brynmawr; Burnley; Burton-upon-Trent; Bury (two); Cadder; Caerphilly; Callander; Calverley; Cambuslang; Cambusnethan; Campsie; Canisbay; Cardross; Carlow; Carluke; Carrickfergus; Cashel (two); Castleblayney; Castleford; Cathcart; Cavan; Celbridge; Chapel en le Frith; Chester le Street; Chingford; Chipping Norton; Chipping Wycombe; Chiswick; Clackmannan; Cleator Moor; Cleethorpes with Thrunscoe; Clonakilty; Clonmel; Coatbridge; Colne; Colwyn Bay and Colwyn; Congleton; Connah's Quay; Cowdenbeath; Crediton; Crewe; Crieff; Crompton; Croydon; Cumnock and Holmhead; Dalry; Dalserf; Dalton-in-Furness; Dalkey; Dalziel; Darvel; Denny; Denny and Dunipace; Desborough; Devonport; Dewsbury; Dornoch (two); Drogheda; Droylsden; Dublin; Dunbarton (two); Dumfries; Dunblane; Dundalk; Dundee (two); Dunfanaghy; Dunfermline (two); Dunnet; Dunstable; Durness; Eastwood; Eday; Edmonton; Egremont; Enniscorthy; Enniskillen; Eyemouth; Falkirk; Failsworth; Fareham (two); Farnworth; Farsley; Fenny Stratford; Fenton; Festiniog; Firth; Flint; Fleetwood; Forehoe; Forres; Fraserburgh (two); Fulham; Galashiels; Galston; Gateshead; Glasgow (two); Glassford; Glossop; Gorton; Gourock; Govan (two); Grangemouth; Greasbrough; Great Harwood; Greenock; Hale; Halifax; Hamilton (two); Hampton; Harrington; Hartlepool; Haslingden; Hasting; Haydock; Hayfield; Hazel Grove and Brambull; Heaton Norris; Hebburn; Heage; Hendon; Hessle; Heysham; Heywood; Hinckley; Holmfirth; Holsworthy; Holyhead; Hoylake; Holywell; Holywood; Hoole; Horwich; Houghton le Spring; Hoylandswaine; Huchnall and Hirthwaite; Huddersfield; Hunslet; Hurst; Ince in Makerfield; Inveresk; Isle of Wight; Itchen; Keighley; Keith; Kenmare; Kennoway; Kettering; Kettle; Kilbarchan; Killarney; Kilbrandon and Kilchattan; Kilfinan; Kilmacolm; Kilmallock; Kilmarnock; Kilmory; Kilmuir Easter; Kingarth; Kingoldrum; Kingston upon Hull; Kingstown; Kirkburton; Kirkby in Ashfield; Kirkcaldy; Kirkcaldy and Dysart; Kirriemuir (two); Ladybank; Lanark (two); Largs; Larne; Leadgate Leek; Lees; Leith; Lepton; Leven; Levenshulme; Leyton; Limavady; Liskeard; Lismore (two); Littleborough; Little Hulton; Llandrindod Wells; Llandudno; Llanelly; Llanfairfechan; Llangefni; Llanrwst; Lochmaben; Logie Pert; Longton; Lurgan; Luton; Lymington; Lytham; Maesteg; Mains and Strathmartine; Mauchline; Mansfield; Market Rasen; Marple; Maryport; Meltham; Menai Bridge; Merthyr Tydfil; Middleton; Middlewich; Midgley; Mold; Montrose; Morpeth; Moulin; Mountain Ash; Mytholmroyd; Nantwich; Narberth; Navan (two); Neilston; Nelson; Newcastle-upon-Tyne; New Cumnock; Newmill; New Mills; New Monkland; Newport (Fife); Newry (two); Newton Stewart; Newport Pagnell; Newton and Llanllwchaiain; New Quay; Norden; Northampton; Ochiltree; Old Cumnock; Omagh (two); Old Monkland; Ossett; Oswaldtwistle; Oystermouth; Paisley (two); Pateley Bridge; Penarth; Penistone; Penrith; Penmaenmawr; Pembroke; Pershore; Perth; Peterculter; Peterhead; Pollokshaws; Poplar; Portrush; Prestwich; Queenstown; Ramsbottom; Rawtenstall; Reay; Renfrew; Rhondda; Rhymney; Risca; Rochdale; Romford; Rotherham; Rothesay; Rothwell; Rosneath; Royton; Runcorn; Ryton; St. Austell (two); St. Neots; St. Pancras; Salford; Saltash; Saltburn by the Sea; Saltcoats; Sandown; Sanquhar (two); Scunthorpe; Seisdon; Selby; Selkirk; Shaftesbury; Shanklin, Sheffield; Shildon and East Thickley;

Shoreditch; Shotts; Skibbereen; Slaithwaite; Smallthorne; Southall Norwood; Southampton; South Bank in Normanby; South Darley; South Shields; Southwick; Sowerby; Springhead; Stewarton (two); Stornoway (two); Stranraer; Swansea (two); Swindon; Tavistock; Thornhill; Thrapstone; Thurmaston; Thurso (two); Tipperary; Tipton; Torthorwald; Tottenham; Tredegar; Tynemouth (two); Tyldesley with Shakerley; Uphall; Urquhart; Wallasey; Wallsend; Walsall; Warminster; Warrenpoint; Wemyss; West Ashford; Westhoughton; West Kilbride; Weymouth and Melcombe Regis; Whitburn; Whitfield; Whitley Upper; Whitstable; Whittington; Whitwood; Whitworth; Wick; Wigan; Wigston Magna; Willington Quay; Wilmslow; Wishaw; Wolstanton and Burslem; Wolverhampton; Wombwell; Workington; Worsborough; Worsley; Worthing; Yeardsley cum Whaley; Yeovil; and Ynyscynhaiarn; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Alveston; Baxenden (two); Beadnell; Bradfield Combust (two); Burnley; Chichester; Cranham; Doddington; East Clandon (two); East Whitton; Euxton (two); Fitz (two); Folkestone; Fulmer (three); Great Calworth (two); Gumley; Hatfield Heath; Hedsor; Kibworth; Kilburn; Linton; Lockwood; Morecombe; Mossley; Nelson; Newchurch in Pendle; Patrick Brompton (two); Royton (three); Royton St. Annes; Rusholme (two); Rustington; St. Andrew's, Manchester; St. Peter's, Manchester; Shadwell; South Kilworth; Standish (three); Stannington; Stowlangtoft; Streat; Sway; Thurston (two); Tottenham (two); Wapley (two) Westhoughton; Widdrington; Worsthorne St. John's, and, Zennor; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of the Gross Amount of all Bank Annuities and any Annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all Sums of Money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the Gross Amount of Annuities for Lives and for terms of years, etc., granted within the year ended 5th January, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 90.]

TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE RIVER COLONY.

Copy presented, of Letter of Instructions to the Chairman of the Committee appointed to inquire and report upon certain matters connected with the future Constitutions of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ALLOTMENTS (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered, "showing (1) the proceedings of parish councils in regard to Allotments and Common Pasture under Section 26 of The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894; and (2) the proceedings of county councils in regard to representations by parish councils for orders under The Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, Section 26, authorising land to be taken on lease compulsorily for Allotments during the year ended the 15th day of May, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 227, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*)

MAGISTRATES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "of the number of Magistrates appointed in the different counties of Ireland, with their names, addresses, and occupations or descriptions from March 1905, to present time (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 118 of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Flynn.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Inmates of Scottish Prisons.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the average aggregate number of prisoners detained in all Scottish prisons during each of the last three years.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The information required by the hon. Member is as follows:—

Return of Commitments to Prisons in Scotland, 1903–4–5.

Year ended.	Ordinary prisoners and forfeited and revoked licence-holders.			Convicts. New sentences of penal servitude and sentences to death.			Lunatics for detention in criminal lunatic department.			Inebriates.			Total of all classes.		
	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.
1903	41,638	18,370	60,008	67	1	68	12	1	13	4	4	8	41,721	18,376	60,097
1904	39,289	17,173	56,462	71	4	75	9	—	9	—	10	10	39,369	17,187	56,556
1905	40,355	16,902	57,257	84	3	87	7	2	9	1	11	12	40,447	16,918	57,365
Total for three years - -													121,537	52,481	174,018
Average - - - - -													40,512	17,494	58,006

Average daily number of Prisoners in Custody in Scotland, 1903–4–5.

Year.	Estimated population of Scotland.	Classification of total.															Total of all classes.		
		Civil.			Criminal lunatics.			Inebriates.			Convicts under sentences of penal servitude.			Ordinary prisoners.					
		M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.	M.	F.	Total.			
1903	4,579,223	—	—	—	46	8	54	4	10	14	266	8	274	1,983	621	2,604	2,299	647	2,946
1904	4,627,656	—	—	—	45	6	51	4	12	16	266	5	271	1,971	574	2,545	2,286	597	2,883
1905	4,676,603	—	—	—	44	4	48	1	13	14	275	8	283	2,000	529	2,529	2,320	554	2,874
																	6,905	1,798	8,703
Average for three years - -																	2,302	599	2,901

Barrack Accommodation in the Punjab.

Mr. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the necessity of moving a Moplah regiment last winter from the hot, humid climate of South Western Madras, where it was recruited, to Dera Ghazi Khan, in the Punjab, where the temperature was under freezing point when it arrived; what was the barrack accommodation prepared for this regiment; and whether 400 out of its strength of 820 men were in hospital a few weeks afterwards.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The 78th Moplah Rifles was moved in relief to Dera Ghazi Khan in September, 1905. I am unable to answer the rest of the Question without a reference to India.

Defence of India's North-West Frontier.

Mr. C. J. O'DONNELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will lay upon the Table of the House the scheme of Lord Kitchener for the defence of the North-West Frontier of India, or such an outline of it as will enable this House to judge whether an outlay of £9,000,000 is being efficiently incurred; and whether he will guarantee that the soldiers of the Native Army, Sikhs, Brahmins, Rajputs, Gurkhas, Biluchis, and others, will not be employed on work such as building, which, according to their customs, they regard as servile and derogatory to their caste feelings.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The scheme is under the consideration of the Government, and I hope to be able, in the annual survey of Indian affairs, to give such an outline as the hon. Member desires, so far as the public interest permits. I am assured that there is no intention whatever to employ soldiers of the Native Army on work derogatory to their caste feeling.

Chatham Dockyard—Discharges of Workmen.

Mr. E. H. LAMB (Rochester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any further reduction in the number of men employed at Chatham Dockyard is contemplated during the ensuing year; and, if so, what number; and whether time can be allowed for any such reduction to be accomplished by ordinary normal wastage instead of by fresh discharges.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) A further reduction in numbers of men at Chatham dockyard is rendered necessary by the programme of work for the ensuing financial year. It is contemplated that some 425 men in all will be affected, but it is hoped, in adjusting trades, to find employment at other yards for some 225 of these. It is not practicable to bring about the reduction of staff wholly by natural wastage, but allowance has been made for this method to operate to the fullest possible extent.

Ballynahinch Postal Arrangements.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will give instructions for the letter-box at Ballyna, hinch to be cleared each morning previous to the mails being sent out, so as to expedite the delivery of letters in the surrounding towns.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The box in question is cleared every morning in time for the letters to be included in the early despatches made to the surrounding district, and in the despatch to Belfast at 10 a.m.

Muckamore Mails.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that on 1st October last the 9 a.m. mail despatched from Muckamore was withdrawn and a despatch at 7.20 p.m. substituted, with inconvenience to the inhabitants of the district; and whether, seeing that the 9 a.m. despatch was established for thirty years, and a memorial has been presented for its continuance, he will consider the advisability of restoring the morning despatch.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) There was reason to believe at the time when the change referred to was introduced that it would be acceptable to the residents generally; but I will have further inquiry made, and, if I find that the new arrangement is not giving satisfaction, I will consider the question of reverting to the old arrangement.

Discharged Soldiers as Vagrants.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Department have Returns showing the number of vagrants relieved in each Poor Law area in 1905 or 1904, and the proportion of them who were discharged soldiers; and, if so, whether he will cause such information to be made public.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The Returns as to pauperism in England and Wales, which are published half-yearly, show the number of vagrants relieved in each Poor Law union on the 1st January and the 1st July in each year. The last of these Returns which has been published relates to the enumeration taken on July 1st, 1905. I have no Returns showing the proportion of the vagrants relieved in 1904 and 1905 who were discharged soldiers. The latest Parliamentary Return on this subject of which I am aware is one which was made in 1898 by the War Office, and which related to the number of discharged soldiers relieved on December 20th, 1897.

Scottish Fishery Board—Members' Fees.

MR. WATT (Glasgow College): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the sums received from the Treasury for fees and expenses by each of the members of the Scottish Fishery Board during each of the years 1900–1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The information required by the hon. Member is as follows:—

	1900.		1901.		1902.		1903.		1904.		1905.	
	Fees.	Expenses.	Fees.	Expenses.	Fees.	Expenses.	Fees.	Expenses.	Fees.	Expenses.	Fees.	Expenses.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Mr. Angus Sutherland	—	4 4 9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10 14 6
Mr. D. Crawford, K.C.	—	5 2 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4 7 0	—	8 13 3
Professor D'Arcy W. Thompson, C.B. -	—	28 16 10	—	23 4 2	34 13 0	31 18 5	—	—	—	26 4 0	15 15 0	23 16 8
The late Mr. J. Ritchie Welch - -	—	28 17 4	—	20 17 3	—	25 9 5	—	5 5 9	—	—	—	—
Dr. W. R. Duguid -	—	53 9 11	—	54 3 0	—	57 9 0	—	47 17 6	—	52 13 3	—	54 12 11
Mr. L. Milloy - -	—	35 9 9	—	19 19 0	—	36 17 5	—	18 14 11	—	20 9 0	—	13 12 8
Mr. D. Mearns - -	—	14 15 0	—	38 7 0	—	50 7 1	—	32 12 0	—	23 12 0	—	17 18 9
Mr. H. Watson - -	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12 5 7	—	14 18 2

Note.—The expenses incurred by Professor Thompson in the year 1903 were not paid until 1904.

Indian Finance.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he will consider the suggestion of the Royal Commission, over which Lord Welby presided, that the financial year for India should end on the 31st December instead of the 31st March, in order that the actual result of the expired year might take the place of the revised estimate which is now presented, and in order that the Indian accounts might be laid before this House at an earlier date, and an earlier discussion of Indian finance thus be made possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) On reference to Parliamentary Paper 169, of 1902, the hon. Member will find that the suggestion was fully considered in 1900 and 1901, and that the Government of India drew attention to the administrative inconvenience that would result from the adoption of the course proposed in paragraph 69 of the Report of the Royal Commission, viz., that the Budget should be introduced two or three months after the beginning of the financial year to which it relates. It was accordingly decided to make no change. As at present advised, I do not propose to modify this decision.

Irish Land Judge's Court.

Mr. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number and aggregate annual rental of estates now in the Land Judge's Court in Ireland in respect of which an absolute order for sale has been made and receivers appointed; have their holdings on all those estates been offered at a fair price to the tenants as required by statute; have the offers of the tenants been rejected on other grounds than that of value; will the Land Judge be asked to furnish particulars of all those insolvent properties to the Estates Commissioners; and will the Commissioners intervene under Section 8 of the Regulations now in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) A Return, No. 256, of the estates for sale in the Land Judge's Court over which receivers have been appointed was last year laid upon the Table pursuant to an Order of this House. This Return dealt with the estates in Court on 31st December, 1904. I am informed that the Land Judge has ordered a similar Return for the year ending 31st December, 1905, to be prepared, and there will be no objection to laying this Return upon the Table if it should be moved for. The learned Judge informs me that a great number of the estates in his Court have been sold under Section 40 of the Land Act of 1896 and Section 7 of the Act of 1903; and a still larger number have been sold by mutual agreement between the parties under the supervision of the Court. Many cases have been dismissed out of Court on the consent of the parties. A considerable number of the estates remaining in Court are non-agricultural. In all other cases every possible step has, I am informed, been taken to bring the estate to sale. In no case, so far as is remembered, has the tenant's offer been rejected on grounds other than that of value, and rarely for that reason. The Land Judge is prepared to furnish the Return mentioned to the Estate Commissioners. Section 8 of the Regulations referred to applies to cases in which differences as to terms of sale exist between landlord and tenant, and is not applicable to cases in the Land Judge's Court.

Functions of the Land Judge's Court.

Mr. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the gross cost to the State, year by year, of the Land Judge's Court in Ireland since its establishment, including every office and position whatsoever appertaining thereto, are the functions of that Court analogous to those of a Bankruptcy Court; what statutory authority, if any, does that Court possess for refusing to sell insolvent property at its value, assuming to itself the role of a permanent landlord, and appointing and maintaining permanent land agents under the name of receivers; and whether, seeing that Parliament has repeatedly ordered the insolvent estates in that Court to be sold, what steps does His Majesty's Government propose to take to expedite this work.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the cost to the State of the Land Judge's Court can be ascertained by a reference to the Estimates from year to year, but it should be remembered that the cost is diminished by the duties levied, in pursuant of statute, on sales made and accounts passed by the Court. The Land Judge informs me that the functions of his Court are in no way analogous to those of a Bankruptcy Court; that the Court has never refused to sell insolvent property at its value, and has never assumed the role of a permanent landlord or appointed permanent land agents as receivers. The learned judge adds that his tribunal has been always kept busy, and that nothing has been left undone to clear the Court of the estates under its jurisdiction. those which had accumulated in it during the last thirty years having amounted to almost one-fourth of the whole of Ireland.

Case of Patrick Murphy.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state the nature of the offence preferred by the Crown against Patrick Murphy, in March 1898, in which Sergeant Sheridan was the principal witness; and will he say whether Murphy pleaded guilty.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the charge preferred by the Crown against Patrick Murphy was that of maliciously maiming an ass. Murphy eventually pleaded guilty at the assizes, but it is only right to add that, at the prior magisterial investigation, he strongly asserted his innocence, and that when arraigned before the court of assize he first pleaded not guilty, but finally pleaded guilty upon the advice of his friends, who suggested to him that the evidence against him, which was principally that of Sheridan, was very strong, and that if he should plead guilty he would probably get off with a lighter sentence.

Sergeant Sheridan, ex R.I.C.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can say on what date was Sergeant Sheridan dismissed from the force; what was the date of the secret police inquiry held to inquire into the case of Patrick Murphy; on what grounds or information was this inquiry ordered; and what are the names of the officers who conducted it.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that Sergeant Sheridan was dismissed from the Royal Irish Constabulary on the 9th February, 1901. The police inquiry into the cases of Patrick Murphy and others was directed by the late Government on the 18th May, 1901, and the inquiry was held between that date and the 15th July, 1901, when the Report of the inquiry was received by the Government. The grounds for holding the inquiry were fully stated in this House by the right hon. Member for Dover on the 23rd July, 1902.† Briefly, the object of the inquiry was to make reparation, if that were possible, to Murphy and others in the event of its being shown that they had been improperly convicted upon the false evidence of Sheridan and others. The officers who conducted the inquiry were District Inspectors Morrison and Hobbins of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Constable Anderson, R.I.C.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can say whether Constable Anderson gave evidence in any case in which Sergeant Sheridan was concerned, except in the case of Patrick Murphy; did Anderson receive any gratuity or inducement from the authorities for the evidence he gave at the secret or any other inquiry in connection with Murphy's case, and, if so, what; and whether he will lay a copy of Anderson's evidence upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that Constable Anderson gave evidence in only one case in which Sergeant Sheridan was concerned, in addition to the case of Patrick Murphy. In that case, which was one of larceny from the person, the accused was acquitted. Constable Anderson received no gratuity or inducement to give evidence at the inquiry, beyond the assurance that if he should tell the truth he would not suffer. The Answer to the final inquiry is in the negative.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxi., 1072 *et seq.*

Gun Licences in Tipperary—Jeremiah O'Dwyer's Case.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Jeremiah O'Dwyer, District Councillor, of Mohorough, Cappawhite, county Tipperary, who farms ninety acres of land, was refused a gun-carrying licence by the local resident magistrate, Mr. H. Turner; whether he can state the grounds of the magistrate's refusal; and whether, seeing that it is usual, except in very special cases, to give farmers the means of protecting, their crops from vermin by the use of firearms, and that O'Dwyer's application has been supported by at least one of the local justices, he will advise the resident magistrate to grant the licence in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I understand that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. A discretionary power in regard to the issue of licences under the Peace Preservation Act is vested in the resident magistrate, who is the licensing officer for the district, and it would be contrary to practice to state the grounds of the magistrate's refusal in any case. I presume there were special reasons why the licence should not be granted in this case; and I am not aware of any reason why the discretion vested in the resident magistrate should be interfered with.

Irish Surveyors of Buildings.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether a candidate for the position of surveyor of buildings has to be nominated by the Board of Public Works, Ireland, before he can compete; whether nominations for those appointments are practically in the hands of the secretary; and whether he can explain how it happens that, out of a total staff of nineteen surveyors of buidings at present employed by this department, eighteen are of the same religious denomination.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, to the second in the negative, the nominations are not in the hands of the Secretary but of the Commissioners, who personally examine into the qualifications of each candidate, and nominate several candidates for each vacancy. As regards the third part of the Question, the Board have no knowledge of the religious denomination of their surveying staff; they do not inquire into it.

Dooner Estate, Queen's County.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware if an application has been made by the owner for sale to the tenants of the Dooner Estate, Ballyroan, Queen's County; whether the application of Peter Singleton, an evicted tenant, to get back his former holding has been considered; and, if so, can he state the result.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them, and that the case of Peter Singleton, who has applied for reinstatement as an evicted tenant, will be considered at the earliest opportunity.

Irish Butter Industry.

Mr. A. ROCHE (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the value of the total amount of butter produced in Ireland in the year 1905; how much of it was produced in the centrifugal factories; what financial aid has his Department given to this branch of the trade; how many of its officers are employed or engaged in furthering this work, and at what cost; and what aid, if any, financial or otherwise, has his Department given towards improving the quality of the remaining quantity of butter produced in the farmers' dairies.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The value of the butter produced in Ireland in 1905 is estimated by the Department of Agriculture at 5¼ millions sterling. There are no means at present of estimating the proportion produced in centrifugal factories. Five officers of the Department are engaged in furthering the butter industry, mainly on its creamery side, namely, two in general inspection of creameries, two instructors in creamery management, and one clerk. The total cost of these officers amounts to about £1,930 per annum. Loans to the amount of £4,840 (of which £2,996 have been repaid) have been issued for the erection of Pasteurising plant in creameries. With regard to the production of butter in farmers' dairies, provision has been made during the current year (1905–6) by twenty-five county committees of agriculture for the employment of thirty itinerant instructors in butter making at a total cost of £3,530, of which the Department will contribute £2,017. Instruction in home dairying is also given at each of the following rural domestic economy schools under the Department or county schemes: Munster Institute, Dunmanway, Portumna, Loughglynn, Westport. The cost of the instruction in butter making cannot be conveniently separated from that of the other instruction in these schools. Other officers of the Department, namely, four transit inspectors one inspector for the detection of frauds, and two inspectors under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts, are partly employed in the interests of the Irish butter industry.

Evicted Farms in County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have sent an inspector to visit the farms of the following evicted tenants: Michael O'Sullivan, Doaghs, Glenbeigh, and Daniel Murphy, Dromin, Killorglin, both of county Kerry; and, if not, whether a man will be sent down at once to report fully as to their condition and as to the possibility of reinstating them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that they have received applications for reinstatement from the two evicted tenants named, and that they will make inquiry into the case of these and other evicted tenants as soon as possible.

Fenit Pier.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the amount of the original loan for the construction of Fenit pier; how much was given as a free grant; what is the rate of interest, sinking fund, and period of repayment; whether he is aware that the Royal Commission (Allport Commission), appointed in 1886, recommended grants in aid of Irish harbours to the extent of £400,000 specifying Fenit and Rosslare as first entitled; whether the full amount of the loan is part of local loans stock bearing interest at 3 per cent.; what would be the difference annually between the interest at 3 per cent.; and the rate at present charged; what would be the amount of that difference from the commencement of the loan to the present day at 2½ per cent. compound interest; whether in the construction of any other pier in Ireland since 1881 interest at so high a rate was charged; and whether steps will be taken to give credit to the guaranteeing baronies for the profit made by the Treasury on this loan from the commencement to the present day, and also to reduce the rate of interest to be paid henceforth.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) (1) Amount of original loan, £95,000. (2) No grant was made. (3, 4, and 5) The loan is repayable by an annuity of £5 1s. per cent. per annum for forty years, which includes interest at 4 per cent. (6) The Allport Commission recommended the grant of £400,000 for the provision of proper harbour accommodation available for fishery and general purposes. They specified, amongst objects that should take precedence, Rosslare and Fenit for grants in aid of the extension of the piers at these places, under (b) of their recommendations (pages 22 and 23 of the Report). (7) The loan was advanced out of the Consolidated Fund, now represented by Local Loans Stock. (8) The loan being repayable by way of annuity, the interest in each instalment is not a fixed proportion, but decreases with each payment. The average annual interest received on the loan amounts to £2,817. If the loan had been made at

3 per cent. the average annual interest would amount to £2,113. (9) The difference, £704, annually accumulated at 2½ per cent. would amount to £22,773. (10) The minimum rate of interest charged for loans for the construction of piers and harbours in the period from 1881 to 1897 was 4 per cent. Since 1897 the rates have been varied from time to time in the case of loans secured on local rates, the present rate for such a loan for forty years being 4 per cent. (11, 12) In the circumstances the Treasury cannot reduce the rate of interest or grant any remission in respect of past payments.

West Kerry Fishing Industry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of boats and men employed in the fishing industry along the West Kerry coast, from Brandon to Dingle which industry is the main if not the only industry along this entire district; whether he is aware that the coast is a dangerous one, rendering the landing of fish difficult; and whether, seeing that repeated applications have been made by the fishermen for better piers, an inspector will be immediately sent down to report on the piers, the boats, and fishing gear, protection from steam trawlers, methods of curing, etc., with a view to more thoroughly develop and protect this industry.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the number of vessels and men employed in the fishing industry in the district referred to are about 340 and 1,100 respectively. Apart from such agriculture as can be carried on in a rough and mountainous region, fishing is the main industry in that district. The coast is admittedly a dangerous one, but the facilities for landing have been improved by the construction of piers and slips. The district is partly within and partly without the congested districts. The Congested Districts Board have improved Brandon Pier and placed a light there, built a pier and made an approach road at Brandon Creek, made a landing at Smerwick Harbour, and built a pier at Dunquin, the total cost of these works being over £2,600. The Board have also offered £400 towards the cost of dredging Dingle Harbour. A slip at Minard has also been made at the joint expense of the Department of Agriculture and the county. It is not considered necessary to send an inspector to report upon the matters referred to in the concluding part of the Question, as to which the Department and the Congested Districts Board have full information. If any specific application in reference to these matters should be made to either body, it will receive careful attention. The enforcement of the bylaws relating to trawling along this coast, is carried out as part of the general scheme for the protection of Irish fisheries. I am informed that there is no part of Ireland where the curing of mackerel is better understood.

Lamberts' Minors Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether negotiations have been going on for some time between the receiver and the agricultural tenants on the estate of the Lamberts' Minors, near Athenry, for the sale to the tenants of their holdings; can he say what was the price demanded from the tenants, as also what offer was made by the tenants; and whether, having regard to the fact that the receiver is now suing the tenants for rent and arrears for the purpose of forcing them into agreements, he will ask the Estates Commissioners to offer their friendly offices to try and bring about a just and honourable settlement.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that the estate in question is not for sale in the Land Judge's Court, but is, however, managed by the Land Judge on behalf of the Lord-Chancellor, who has given permission to the receiver to negotiate for a sale to the tenants. I am informed that the terms of sale offered to first term tenants were twenty-one and half years purchase, which would give a reduction of 6s. in the pound; and to second term tenants twenty-four and two-thirds years purchase, which would give a reduction of 4s. in the pound. The tenants have offered eighteen and one-half years and twenty-one and one-half years purchase, respectively, which offers were considered entirely inadequate. The receiver is not suing for the recovery of rent, but has called upon the tenants to pay the half year's rent due on 1st May, 1905. The case does not appear to be one in which the Estates Commissioners could intervene under Section 8 of the regulations.

Clonkeen Evicted Tenant.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if the Land Judge gave his consent to the eviction of Joseph Brooks and his family, of Clonkeen, Queen's County, which was carried out by the receiver, Mr. Kennedy Mullingar, last month; and whether, as other evictions are threatened on the M'Neale estate, the Estates Commissioners will intervene to effect a settlement, proposals to purchase their holdings by the tenants having broken down.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Registrar of the Land Judge's Court that, so far as he can ascertain, no proceedings for the sale of the estate referred to are pending in that court. The Estates Commissioners have no information in the matter, but if any application should be made to them by any of the persons concerned they will consider whether the matter is one in which they can properly intervene.

Kiltullagh Branch of the United Irish League.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Murphy, of Kiltullagh, county Galway, received a letter on the 3rd instant threatening him with death if he continued to work for Michael Forde, of Kilarriff, who is boycotted because he refused to give up, at the request of the Kiltullagh branch of the United Irish League, a farm purchased by him under the Ashbourne Act; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that on the date mentioned a threatening notice directed against John Murphy was found on the roadside. The notice, which alleged that Murphy was a supporter of Michael Forde, appeared to have been exposed to the weather for a considerable time, the paper and ink being much faded. Murphy has not been employed by Forde for the past year. Forde was at one time unpopular because he had purchased a portion of grazing farm, but he is not now boycotted as stated in the Question.

Agrarian Outrage at Pollnashinnagh.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 12th February last eleven tons of hay belonging to Captain Persse was maliciously burned at Pollnashinnagh near Kilchreest, county Galway; whether the police have discovered the person responsible for this; and, if not, what steps are being taken to protect property in this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The police have not yet succeeded in discovering the offender. They are fully alive to their duty as regards the protection of property.

Irish School Grants—Report of Inter-Departmental Committee.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee of 1902 on School Grants in Ireland has ever been made public; and, if not, whether he will now lay it upon the Table, together with the decision of the Government and the Treasury on it.

(*Answered by McKenna.*) The Report referred to was a confidential document, and the late Government decided that it should not be published. I do not feel able to take any different view of the matter.

Rossmore Evicted Tenants.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, County W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the

Estates Commissioners will inquire into all the circumstances connected with the eviction of Mrs. Evans from her farm at Rossmore, Durrus, county Cork, which is to be sold by public auction on the 26th instant.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that purchase agreements for three holdings at Rossmore, on the estate of Lord Bandon, have been signed and lodged with them by William Kearney, who, the Commissioners understand, has now advertised these farms for sale by public auction, subject to the annuity of £15 19s. 2d. payable to the Land Commission. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with the sale by Kearney of his interest in these holdings, nor could they purchase them subject to the annuity. They will, however, inquire into the circumstances of the eviction of Mrs. Evans at the earliest opportunity.

Sale of Kearney's Farms.

MR. GILHOOLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Congested Districts Board has been called to the proposed sale, on the 26th instant, of three farms at Rossmore, Durrus, county Cork, by Mr. William Kearney, who holds the fee simple of them; and whether, seeing that three tenants on adjacent estates are willing to migrate to these holdings and surrender their farms, in order to enlarge other holdings on the Bird, Beamish, and O'Donovan estates, urge the Congested Districts Board to buy Mr. Kearney's interest.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Congested Districts Board are making inquiries into this matter with the object of considering whether they will make an offer for the purchase of the farms referred to.

Tenant Farmers and the Land Sub-Commission.

MR. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that a feeling prevails amongst the tenant farmers, over a large area of Ireland, for the re-adoption of the former practice of having two lay members on each Land Sub-Commission, one of whom should be a practical tenant-farmer enjoying the confidence of his own class; and, if so, whether he will introduce a reform in the *personnel* of the Sub-Commission, so that the tenant should enjoy a proportional representation thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am not aware that there is any widespread desire for a reversion to the former practice of having two lay Assistant Commissioners in each Sub-Commission. The present system was provided by the Act of 1903, and until His Majesty's present Government have gained more experience of the working of that Act I am not prepared to make any statement as to possible legislation.

Library Buildings in Dublin.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state what decision has been arrived at by the Committee appointed by the Treasury, early in 1905, to consider the question of accommodation in the library buildings, Dublin, now under the control of the Department of Agriculture; and whether he is aware of the increasing demand for accommodation, seeing that a great number of publications have been acquired during recent years, and that the usefulness of the library is shown by the increase in the daily average of attendances, from 528 in 1899 to 677 in 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The decision of the Committee cannot be explained within the limits of an Answer to a Question, but I shall be happy to give the hon. Member what information I can if he will communicate with me in writing. The facts stated in the second part of the Question are correct.

Intermediate Education Examination Programme.

MR. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the unpunctuality of the Intermediate Education Board in publishing the annual programme of examinations has been complained of by head masters and teachers for some years past; whether he will urge on the Board the necessity of publishing the programme early in April, as was originally the practice; and whether he will further represent to the Board the inconvenience to schools and teachers occasioned by prescribing for study text books which at the time have not been edited or published.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Intermediate Education Board that they have not undertaken to publish their rules and programme for any year at any fixed date, and that consequently no question of punctuality arises. It is expected that the rules and programme for the year 1907 will be ready for publication next month. The Board are taking steps to obviate the inconvience referred to in the concluding part of the Question.

Militia Bands.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the cost of maintaining the bands of Militia regiments falls very heavily on the officers; and whether, therefore, he is prepared to increase substantially the allowance now made for that purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Haldane.*) The present band allowance of £25 was granted in 1899. No complaints, of the nature alluded to in the Question, have reached the War Office. No increase of the allowance is at present contemplated.

Militia Officers' Chargers.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he is prepared to extend to mounted officers of Militia regiments the same privileges as to the provision of, or allowance for, chargers as are enjoyed by officers of other branches of the Service.

(*Answered by Mr. Haldane.*) The grant of such a privilege would involve considerable expenditure, for which at the present time there is no money available. I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot undertake to make the concession suggested by the hon. and gallant Member.

Dalston Barracks.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the rent formerly paid for the Dalston Barracks of the 7th battalion of the Rifle Brigade; whether the rent was at any time redeemed, and for what sum; also what was the length of the unexpired portion of the lease in 1904, when these barracks were vacated, and for what sum the premises were disposed of by the War Office; and what is the rent now demanded by the purchaser in case it is found advisable to return the battalion to its former quarters.

(*Answered by Mr. Haldane.*) The original rent was £113 3s. 6d. In 1893 the lease was bought for £3,750, subject to a ground rent of £50. In 1904 there were forty years of the lease to run, and a sum of £1,150 was obtained for the surrender of the lease. No information with regard to the rent that would now be demanded is available.

Volunteer Sergeant Instructors.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the sergeant-instructors allowed by Parliament to Volunteer corps are being withdrawn for courses of instruction during the training season (March to September), when they are urgently required with their units; and whether he will issue instructions that they shall only be withdrawn between September and March.

(*Answered by Mr. Haldane.*) It is left to the discretion of general officers commanding to decide at what time of the year these men shall be attached to a regular unit or depot for period of instruction lasting fourteen days. It is impossible, therefore, to reply to the Question without referring to all general officers commanding, with whose discretion it would not appear expedient to interfere.

Physical Standard for Volunteer and Yeomanry Recruits.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of now relaxing the regulations as to the physical development and teeth of recruits for the Volunteer and Yeomanry forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Haldane.*) I am not aware of any reasons for considering that the physical standard laid down for recruits of Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteers is too high, nor does my hon. friend suggest any. As regards teeth there is no fixed standard, and the matter is left to the judgment and discretion of the examining officer.

Macedonian Gendarmerie.

MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether satisfactory progress has been made during the past year in the re-organisation of the gendarmerie in Macedonia.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Grey.*) Information on this subject, more complete than I can give in Answer to a Question, will be contained in the Papers regarding affairs in Macedonia, which will be laid before the House within the next few days.

White Labour in the Australian Gold Mines.

MR. CHARLES McVEIGH (Down, S.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what wages are paid to white men employed on the Australian gold mines, and what it costs per ton to mine and mill the ore in each of the States of Western Australia, Victoria, and Queensland; and whether he can state what wages are paid to the Chinamen imported to South Africa, and what it costs to mine and mill the ore per ton on the mines they are employed in on the Transvaal gold fields.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The wages paid to white men employed in Western Australian gold mines appear to vary from a minimum of about 10s. per shift to surface labourers, to a minimum of about 15s. or 16s. for rock-drill men in shafts; men working in wet ground being paid 1s. 8d. per shift in addition to the ordinary rate of pay. In Victoria the wages of surface men vary from £1 to £2 5s. per week, and of miners and pitmen from £2 5s. to £3. The cost of mining and milling varies largely; the average cost of working, per ton, in twenty-two companies in Western Australia in 1905 varied from 16s. 5d. to 38s. 8d.; adding to this the average cost of development, the variation was from 22s. 7d. per ton to over 40s. per ton. The average working costs, per ton, over the whole amount of tons mined and milled, do not appear to be given in the Reports of the States mentioned; but some indication is afforded by the dividends paid. Thus, in Western Australia in 1903, dividends to the amount of £2,024,152 were paid on a total product of the value of £8,770,719, or about one-fourth. The ore value appears to be about one ounce per ton, or about 72s. In Victoria the amount of ore treated was 1,078,433 tons in 1903, and the dividends of the principal lode mines were about £500,000. In Queensland the value of the gold yield of 1904 was £2,714,934 and the dividends paid by gold mining companies amounted to £831,966. The average wages paid to Chinese labourers in the Transvaal were, for the year June, 1904, to June, 1905, £1 13s. 6d. per man per month; for the year 1905 the average monthly wage was £1 17s. 7d. The cost of mining and treating the ore in the Transvaal mines is variable, and no average figures are given by the Mines Department, but the working costs of the subsidiary companies of the Rand Mines, Limited, are cited as representative of the working costs of the gold mines in the Witwatersrand area, and these are £1 2s. 8d. per ton. Every effort has been made by this Department to provide my hon. friend with a full and accurate reply; but I must observe that, having regard to the very complicated and extensive nature of the Question, it would have been more convenient had he found it possible to give me somewhat longer notice.

Stornoway Post Office.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of letters, inwards and outwards, and parcels, inwards and outwards, at Stornoway post office during the year ending 31st December, 1905, and the corresponding numbers for the year ending 31st December, 1896.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The estimated number of letters and parcels dealt with in the Stornoway post office are as follows:— Year ended 31st December, 1896. Letters delivered, 458,328; Letters posted, 353,704; parcels delivered, 19,708; Parcels posted, 11,180. Year ended 31st December, 1905. Letters delivered, 796,172; Letters posted, 644,852; parcels delivered, 46,890; parcels posted, 25,428.

Postal Accommodation in Crossdoney District.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a large district, densely populated, in the Crossdoney postal district of Cavan has no postal accommodation other than the mail car driver, who stops to take up letters from the country people between Drumconnick and Crossdoney; and whether, in view of the inconvenience inflicted upon the country people, who have to wait for the uncertain arrival of the mail car, he will give the matter his immediate attention.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am not aware of the circumstances referred to, but I will have inquiry made on the subject and will acquaint the hon. Member with the result.

Swine Fever.

MR. FIELD: To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will state how many cases of swine fever, traceable to Irish pigs, occurred in each particular county of England during each of the six months ending 31st January, 1906.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The only case of swine fever in England which has been traced to Irish pigs during the six months ending 31st January last, is one of a consignment of pigs sent from Waterford to Cardiff, *via* Milford, in November last, which were found diseased when exposed for sale in Routh Market, Cardiff, two days later. The safeguards against the introduction of disease provided by the Swine Fever (Movement from Ireland) Order of 1904 were, of course, in operation during the whole of the period.

Caithness Sea Fisheries.

MR. MILDMAY (Devonshire, Totnes): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Government have any intention of acting upon the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the sea fisheries of Sutherland and Caithness, of which he was a member, and of enabling the fishermen concerned to obtain improved boats by the loan system, so successful in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) It is too early to form a definite opinion on the success of the Irish system, and at present the Government do not propose to resume the system of loans to fishermen for this purpose.

Imports of Frozen Meat.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will say how much frozen mutton and frozen beef were imported during the year 1905 from Australasia and from South America respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Frozen meat is included with fresh meat in the official statistics of imports. The following statement shows the registered quantities and values of fresh beef and fresh mutton imported into the United Kingdom from Australasia and South America during the year 1905—

Description of meat, &c.		From Australasia.	From South America.
Fresh beef :			
Quantity - - - -	cwts.	164,363	2,620,321
Value - - - - -	£	239,740	3,812,376
Fresh mutton :			
Quantity - - - -	cwts.	2,030,394	1,516,918
Value - - - - -	£	4,152,761	2,567,322

Railway Transport of Fruit.

Mr. NAPIER (Kent, Faversham): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the recent development of the fruit-growing industry and to the inadequacy of the facilities for transport of fruit on railways, and the rates charged for such transport, the nature of the present classification of goods and their effect upon the Home fruit industry, the Government is prepared at an early date to legislate in the direction of greatly cheapening procedure before the Railway Commission, and giving such Commission power to revise the present classification of goods, and more effectively to deal with rates and facilities.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I may remind my hon. friend that a Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture has recently reviewed the position of the fruit industry in this country, and reported on the subject last year. The Committee did not think it necessary to recommend legislation of the nature proposed in my hon. friend's Question.

Foreign Seamen on British Vessels.

Mr. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the increase in the employment of Chinese and other foreigners on board British vessels; and whether he will introduce legislation compelling British vessels sailing from British ports to engage British subjects, to the extent of at least 75 per cent. of the total number of the crews.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My attention has been called to the increase in number of foreigners employed in our mercantile marine. I do not propose to introduce legislation compelling British vessels sailing from British ports to engage any specified proportion of British subjects; but the Bill now before Parliament provides that no seaman shall be engaged in the United Kingdom before a superintendent who has not sufficient knowledge of English to understand the necessary orders. I understand that the majority of the Chinese on British ships have been engaged at Singapore and at Hong Kong, and therefore the hon. Member has no right to assume that they are not British subjects.

Foreign Pilots in British Waters.

Mr. HOUSTON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the increasing numbers of foreigners engaged in piloting British vessels in British waters; whether, with the view of preventing danger to Great Britain in time of war, he will take measures to prevent pilots of any other nationality than British being engaged in home waters.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) If the hon. Member will refer to the debate on the First Reading of the Merchant Shipping Amendment Bill, he will see that I intimated that I was considering the question whether provision can be made in that Bill for prohibiting or restricting the grant of pilotage certificates to masters or mates who are not British subjects.† The question is one of Treaty obligations, which is now being considered by the law officers.

Income-Tax on Unoccupied Furnished Houses.

Mr. FIELD: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will direct the income-tax authorities in Dublin to give a definite answer to the town clerk of Blackrock as to whether the owners or holders of unoccupied furnished houses are liable for income-tax on the same during the periods they happen to be unoccupied and during which period no profit is derived from the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The liability to income-tax depends on the precise circumstances of each particular case. In the present instance the applicant has been informed that the question is one which must be determined by the Special Commissioners of Taxes, when they are next on circuit in the district, and that in the meantime payment of the duty assessed will not be demanded.

Old-Age Pensions.

Mr. LIDDELL (Down W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will cause inquiries to be made with a view of ascertaining what annual charge would be imposed on the Imperial Exchequer were old-age pensions of 5s. a week granted to all persons over seventy, and whether he will take into consideration the feasibility of conferring old-age pensions upon persons over seventy, thus benefiting a smaller class of the population, though possibly at an earlier date than would be possible were the old-age pensions to be conferred at the age of sixty-five.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) At the last census the number of persons aged seventy or over enumerated was 1,205,069. It would therefore require over £15,500,000 to provide pensions of 5s. a week. I have nothing to add to the statements I have already made on the subject in this House, except that no aspect of the question will be lost sight of.

Olympic Games.

Mr. WATT: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the French Government has granted 10,000 francs towards the expenses of competitors at the approaching Olympic games, and that the German and United States Governments have also made grants for the same purpose, he will make a similar donation from the British Exchequer for British competitors.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have received no application for such a donation, and, as it present advised I see no reason for granting any subsidy from public funds.

Rating of Forest Produce in India.

Mr. HART-DAVIES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, under the orders of the Government of India, No. 22, of

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 291.

19th October, 1894, villagers are entitled to the free use of forest produce from unreserved land for local industrial requirements, but that, under the orders of the Government of Madras, dated 1st December, 1905, the collector of Tanjore is levying from the inhabitants of the Tanjore Delta a rate on account of wood required for agricultural implements and leaves required for manure; and whether, looking to the scarcity now prevailing in those districts, he will cause inquiry to be made into this complaint.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Resolution of the Government of India of 1894, to which the Question refers, does not entitle villagers to the free use of forest products in unreserved districts, but merely says that "every reasonable facility should be afforded to the people concerned for the full and easy satisfaction of their needs; if not free, as may be possible where a system of regular cuttings has been established, then at low and not at competitive rates." As to the order stated to have been issued with respect to the Tanjore forests, I have no information, but I presume that it was duly issued under the Madras Forest Act, which gives a certain discretion to the Madras Government with regard to the regulation of unreserved tracts. As at present advised I see no sufficient reason for ordering an inquiry.

Swine Fever in Ireland.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state how many cases of swine fever occurred in each province of Ireland during each of the six months ending 31st January, 1906.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The following table gives the number of swine which were affected with swine fever during the period mentioned:—

	Ulster.	Munster.	Leinster.	Connaught.
August, 1905 - - - -	4	75	5	—
September, 1905 - - -	2	24	—	—
October, 1905 - - -	2	—	1	—
November, 1905 - - -	—	—	2	—
December, 1905 - - - -	—	—	—	—
January, 1906 - - - -	—	—	4	—
Total - - -	8	99	12	—

Total for Ireland, 119.

Advances under the Labourers Acts.

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amounts which have been advanced year by year for the purposes of the Labourers Acts (Ireland) since 1883.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am informed that the amounts referred to are as follows :—

Year ended.	Advanced.		
	£	s.	d.
31st March 1884 -	Nil.		
„ 1885 -	Nil.		
„ 1886 -	106,114	13	10
„ 1887 -	116,288	6	0
„ 1888 -	194,439	8	5
„ 1889 -	242,597	1	5
„ 1890 -	139,450	7	10
„ 1891 -	139,135	0	0
„ 1892 -	115,132	15	8
„ 1893 -	111,497	16	6
„ 1894 -	71,627	5	0
„ 1895 -	89,875	0	0
„ 1896 -	100,060	0	0
„ 1897 -	139,005	0	0
„ 1898 -	107,750	0	0
„ 1899 -	110,013	0	0
„ 1900 -	47,203	0	0
„ 1901 -	54,745	11	9
„ 1902 -	157,809	17	0
„ 1903	251,367	10	0
„ 1904 -	287,764	0	5
„ 1905 -	300,642	0	0
21st March 1906 -	252,115	14	10
Total advanced to date	3,134,633	8	8

Fishing on the Stobs Estate.

Sir JOHN JARDINE (Roxburghshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware of a notice, published on the 1st March, 1906, by R. L. Hippisley, Colonel, Chief Engineer, Scottish Command, to the effect that the fishing of the Slitrig, and other waters on the War Department's estate of Stobs, is closed to the public from that date, and that all free permits for such fishing are thereby cancelled, and that a limited number of permits will be issued at a small charge; and whether the limitation of the access of the public for fishing heretofore enjoyed is made necessary by military considerations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) My hon. friend is mistaken in supposing that the public have hitherto had the right of access to the Stobs estate for the purpose of fishing; the fishing has always been preserved. Certain free permits were, however, issued by camp commandants under a misapprehension. It is intended that the preservation of the waters shall be continued.

Donegal Militia.

Mr. CHARLES McVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state how many recruits have the Donegal Militia got for the past three years; and how many recruits did they get for the last three years they were stationed at Lifford.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The recruits taken for the last three calendar years were as follows:—1903, 75; 1904, 66; 1905, 72; for the last three calendar years in which their headquarters were at Lifford the recruits taken were:—1896, 123; 1897, 111; 1898, 154.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Officers' Retired Pay.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that an Order in Council, of the 20th November, 1905, under Section 7, confers powers on the Admiralty over the retired pay of officers of an absolute character, rendering the Admiralty the sole judge as to the actions of the retired officer, and empowering them to forfeit his pay without any form of trial other than that of the consideration of his case by the Lords of the Admiralty; and whether the Admiralty will take immediate steps to limit these powers.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Order in Council was obtained in order to define in precise form the powers exercised by the Admiralty in the past, and it was drawn up on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

*CAPTAIN HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds) asked if the word "misconduct" as used in the Order could be construed by the Admiralty as an offence——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must give notice.

Foreign Steam Trawlers in the English Channel—Plymouth and Brixham Fishermen's Losses.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the attention of the Admiralty has been drawn to the damage lately caused by foreign steam trawlers in the English Channel to the fishing gear of the Brixham trawling vessels "Salem," "Iris," and "I'll Try," and to the effect the repeated cases of such damage are having on the fishing industry; and whether the Admiralty will consider the advisability of placing a gunboat or other suitable vessel on patrol duty on the fishing grounds, in order to give security to the industry and to prevent a recurrence of such cases.

MR. DOBSON (Plymouth): May I also ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that owners of eight fishing smacks from Plymouth have had nearly 300 of their nets either destroyed or seriously injured by foreign steam trawlers; and whether he will consider the advisability of placing a gunboat on patrol duty on the fishing grounds, in order to give security to the industry and to prevent a recurrence of such cases.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No report of the circumstances stated has so far been received in the office, but directions have been given for the area to be patrolled by a coast guard cruiser.

Seamens Cap Ribbons.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the frequency with which seamen and stokers are moved from ship to ship, so entailing on them the expense of purchasing new cap ribbons; and whether the Admiralty will in future issue two cap ribbons free of charge.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The matter is at present under consideration.

Naval Manœuvres—Insurance Scheme.

LORD TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham), (on behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether His Majesty's Government are taking out a policy of £10,000,000 to cover the possible risk to private property owing to the approaching naval manœuvres; and whether any, and, if so, what arrangement is or will be made to provide compensation in the case of injuries to persons and loss of life which may accompany the contemplated loss of property.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Admiralty have agreed to indemnify the owners of ships co operating in the manœuvres against losses arising from such co-operation, including injuries to person as well as property. The Admiralty have in turn insured themselves against the liability so undertaken by them. The sum of £10,000,000 mentioned in the Question is the estimated value of the ships, including cargo, expected to co operate. The agreements are still under consideration by the Admiralty legal advisers and an advisory Committee representing the other interests involved.

In answer to Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) and others, Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON repeated that the negotiations were still going on, and nothing definite had been completed.

Tristan da Cunha.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether in view of the fact that January, 1904, was the last occasion on which one of His Majesty's ships sailed with mails and parcels from Cape Town to Tristan da Cunha, he will favourably consider the petition, addressed to the Government of Cape Colony by the relations of these islanders living in that colony, praying that the custom of despatching a war ship annually from Simon's Bay to that island may be revived.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Admiralty have no knowledge of any such petition.

MR. ASHLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The hon. Gentleman had better communicate with the Foreign Office.

Discharge of Pembroke Dockyard Workmen.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Government propose further to reduce the number of men employed in the Pembroke dockyard.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It will be necessary to discharge 200 men from Pembroke dockyard, beginning from the 1st April.

Tibetan Indemnity.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the final arrangement come to between the Government of India and the Tibetan authorities in September, 1904, was that the Tibetan Government should pay to the Government of India an indemnity of Rs. 25,00,000 payable by annual instalments of Rs. 1,00,00, the first instalment being payable on January 1st, 1906; whether this instalment has been paid; and, if not, whether it is proposed to allow payment to lapse or to take any measures to enforce payment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The indemnity payable by Tibet is as stated. The first instalment of one lakh became due on January 1st last. Communications as to the payment are now proceeding between the Government of India and a Tibetan official who has been instructed by the Lhasa Government to arrange for the payment.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked whether the House was to understand that the Tibetan Government had to pay an indemnity of Rs. 10,000,000 rupees a year for being invaded.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I can only go by the Convention.

SIR H. COTTON: Are we to understand that no part of the indemnity has been paid?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Proceedings are going on, as I have said, at Calcutta, between the officials of the Government of India and the Tibetan Government.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): The last part of the Question is the most important. Is it proposed to use any force to compel payment if the Tibetan Government refuses to pay?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: That Question the Government will consider when occasion arises.

The Chumbi Valley.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the character of the temporary occupation of the Chumbi Valley in Tibet by the British Government, the name of and powers exercised by the civil officer who is in responsible charge of the valley on behalf of the Government, the strength of the British and Indian garrisons stationed in this territory, and the estimated annual cost of the occupation.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Our temporary occupation of the Chumbi Valley is based on a system of allowing the people to manage their affairs through their headmen with a right of appeal in certain cases against their headmen to the assistant political agent. After discussion with the local headmen, proposals to raise a revenue estimated at Rs. 4,075 per annum on the lines of the existing system of taxation have been sanctioned by the Government of India. This is less than the amount hitherto raised. The civil officer in responsible charge of the valley is Mr. J. C. White, political officer in Sikkim, with an assistant stationed in the Chumbi Valley. The strength of the troops is two and a half companies of Native Infantry (about 200 men). I have no separate figures of cost. But the total annual cost of the occupation of the Chumbi and of the trade agencies at Gyangtse and Gartok, including military expenditure is Rs. 3,85,600.

SIR H. COTTON: Looking to the fact that the occupation of the valley was to last for three years only, I should like to know whether the omission to pay the indemnity will protract that occupation.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: We must wait, and see whether the indemnity is or is not paid.

Tibetan Trade Marts.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in accordance with the terms of the Convention of 1904 between Great Britain and Tibet, trade marts have been opened out at Gyantze, Gartok, and Yatung; whether British agents have been appointed at these marts; and, if so, what are their names and official rank, the strength of the escort, if any, which has been provided for each place, and the estimated annual cost of maintaining those agencies.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Trade marts have been opened at Gyangtse and Gartok under the terms of the Convention of 1904. The mart at Gyangtse has taken the place of that at Yatung, at which no trade agent is stationed. Captain O'Connor has been appointed trade agent at Gyangtse and Thakeer Jai Chand at Gartok. There is no escort at Gartok. The escort at Gyangtse consists of seventy-five native infantry.

Indian Military Administration.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Committee appointed last year to advise His Majesty's Government on the question of Indian military administration stated in their Report that they invited opinions from Lord Cromer, Lord Elgin, Sir H. Brackenbury, Sir E. H. Collen, and others, and whether he is now aware that these opinions were obtained for the use of the Committee, and not privately by Mr. Brodrick for his own information; whether, as these opinions were obtained by the Committee for a public purpose, and were twice referred to by them in their Report, which has been laid before Parliament, he will, in accordance with ordinary usage, present them to Parliament also; whether any opinions from the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief were laid before the Committee other than those which have already appeared in the Blue-book; and, if so, whether he will also present them to Parliament.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am aware of the statement in the Report, but I have reason to believe that the Answer which I gave on the 2nd inst. represents accurately what took place.† It is certain that such opinions as were given in writing were regarded by my predecessor as private and confidential documents; for, as I have already stated, he left no copies of them at the India Office. This being so, I am of course unable to present them to Parliament. I am not aware of any opinions that were laid before the Committee other than those which appeared in the Blue-book.

Colonial Immigration Bills.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of Bills passed by colonial legislatures having reference to immigration from which the Royal Assent was withheld during the ten years from 1885–95, and from 1895–1905 respectively.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The only Bills relating to immigration passed by colonial legislatures to which the Royal Assent was refused between 1885 and 1905 are the four mentioned in the House of Commons Return No. 362 of 1901. Immigration Acts of the Province of British Columbia have been disallowed by the Governor-General of Canada at our request, but the Question of my hon. friend would scarcely apply to these; for the provincial legislation of Canada is not subject to Royal Assent, but is subject to disallowance by the Governor-General.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1388.

Cable Communication with the West Indies.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the frequent interruptions of cable communication in the West Indies owing largely to submarine volcanic disturbances; and whether, in these circumstances, His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of extending the system of wireless telegraphy now in use between Trinidad and Tobago to others of the islands also.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The Secretary of State is aware of the desirability of improving telegraphic communication in the British West Indies; and in considering this Question he will certainly not lose sight of the possibilities of wireless telegraphy.

Foreign Steam Trawlers in the English Channel — Losses of Gear by Brixham Boats.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the losses of fishing gear sustained by the owners of the Brixham trawling vessels "Salem," "Iris," and "I'll Try," through the action of foreign steam trawlers in the English Channel, and to the effect the repeated cases of such damage are having on the fishing industry; and whether he will make representations to the foreign Governments concerned, with a view to securing compensation for such losses, and preventing their recurrence in the future.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Representations have been made with regard to the "Salem," and the same course will be taken with regard to the "I'll Try." No action is possible in the case of the "Iris," unless the offending vessel can be identified.

MR. MALLET (Plymouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the losses sustained by Plymouth fishermen, owing to the recent action of foreign steam trawlers in the English Channel, and whether he will make representations to the foreign Governments concerned, with a view to securing compensation, and to preventing such losses in future.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer I gave to the hon. Member for the Torquay Division is also a reply to this Question.†

Russian Duties on Indian and Ceylon Teas.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that Indian and Ceylon tea, shipped to Russian European ports, either direct or *via* United Kingdom, is subject to a differential duty of one penny per pound as against tea produced by other countries; and whether, seeing that recent telegrams give ground for supposing that the Russian Government contemplate still further imposts on British-grown tea, and that orders for Indian and Ceylon tea have consequently been held back, pending further information on the subject, he will say whether any remonstrances have been addressed to the Russian Government; and whether His Majesty's Government will use every effort to prevent this industry being thus handicapped in Russian markets.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. I have no reason to suppose that the duty will be further increased. It is not proposed to make further representations to the Russian Government, as those made a few months ago led to no result.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: Will the Government consider the advisability of retaliating upon Russian oil?

SIR EDWARD GREY: These particular duties which the Russian Government have imposed are by way of retaliation for the prohibition of Russian sugar under the Sugar Convention. I do not think it will be desirable to carry the game of retaliation any further.

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† See preceding Question and Answer.

Turkey and the Sinai Peninsula.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Turkish garrisons have been reinforced at points near the Sinai Peninsula, now the subject of negotiations between the Egyptian Government and the Sublime Porte; and, if so, do His Majesty's Government propose to take any action in the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Government have no information as to the despatch of reinforcements to the posts now occupied by Turkish troops in the Sinai Peninsula. According to the latest information in their possession there are three battalions at Akaba.

British Vice-Consuls on the Congo.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Elland Division of Yorkshire I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Consul Nightingale has now returned to his post on the Lower Congo; whether the British vice-consuls on the Upper Congo have yet started on the inland tour decided upon by His Majesty's Government; and whether their itinerary will include an extensive visit to the portion of the Congo territories known as the Domaine de la Couronne.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Consul Nightingale arrived at his post on the 19th ultimo. We are expecting to receive very shortly estimates of the cost of the tours which the two vice-consuls are to make in the interior. It is proposed that the Domaine de la Couronne shall be one of the districts visited.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Are we to understand there are only two vice-consuls on the Congo?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Oh, no. I am not sure what the total number is, but I will ascertain if the hon. Member wishes.

Macedonian Budget.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any Budget has been prepared by the Commission of Financial Control for Macedonia; and, if so, what sums have been allotted to the departments of police, works, justice and civil administration.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Budgets of the three vilayets of Salonica, Monastir, and Kossovo have been settled by the International Financial Commission, and forwarded to the Sublime Porte. The sum which it is proposed to allot for civil administration is £768,697. This includes £26,803 for the department of police and £76,691 for the department of justice. A sum of £77,851 is provided for public works.

Inland Revenue Abatements.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer why the Board of Inland Revenue have made new regulations, which deprive persons from the relief to which they are statutorily entitled under Section 8 of 61 and 62 Vic., c. 10, except under such conditions as they admit are practically impossible to be complied with.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The regulations are designed merely for the purpose of obtaining satisfactory proof of a claimant's title to relief. They only operate to deprive a claimant of relief when he cannot produce such proof, and in the view of the Department they can be complied with.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether claimants entitled to relief from Income Tax, under 61 and 62 Vic., c. 10, Part 3, s. 8, can be deprived of any part of the repayment to which they are entitled, on the ground that some of their dividends are upon stocks and shares which are not exclusively inscribed or registered in their own name.

MR. ASQUITH: No. But they must produce satisfactory evidence of their beneficial interest in such stocks and shares.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, when the Board of Inland Revenue require documentary legal evidence of a claimant being entitled to a certain proportion of an income, whether inscribed or registered in his own name or in the names of others, they will supply him with a form to be executed in Great Britain before a magistrate, justice of the peace, or a commissioner for oaths, or abroad before the British consul, justice of the peace, or a notary public, that the claimant may know their requirements.

Mr. ASQUITH: What the Commissioners of Inland Revenue require in cases of securities registered in names other than that of the claimant is not an instrument in the form of a declaration made for the express purpose of obtaining a repayment of Income Tax, but some documentary evidence which shall establish the fact of beneficial ownership, on the part of the claimant, in stocks or shares standing in some other person's name. What such documentary evidence should be must depend upon the particular circumstances of each case, and cannot well be prescribed beforehand or be embodied in a form.

Taxation on Sport.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, in view of the fact that he is not prepared to impose a special tax on deer forests, salmon fishings, and grouse moors, he will consider the expediency of imposing a special tax on other objects of sumptuary expenditure, such as yachts and motor cars, other than those used for professional or business purposes.

Mr. ASQUITH: The question of widening the range of taxation upon luxuries will have my serious consideration; but I cannot with advantage deal with specific proposals, except in connection with the financial system of the country as a whole in the annual Budget statement.

Mr. WEIR hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take an early opportunity of considering the matter, as Scotland was much in need of money for public purposes.

Abstractor Clerks in the Customs.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the scale of overtime payments for abstractor clerks was calculated on the maximum salary of £150; and in view of the fact that a number of these clerks in the Customs Statistical Office are in receipt of a salary and allowance rising to £180, for checking the work of other clerks who are engaged upon the duties of compiling and preparing for publication the Board of Trade Returns of Imports and Exports, whether he will amend the scale of overtime payment in such a manner that the rate per hour shall not be less than that earned during the day.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): With regard to the first part of the Question I have nothing to add to the Answer which I gave the hon. Member on the 1st instant.† It is a fact that the checking allowances are not taken account of in fixing the rate of overtime payment. These allowances are intended to cover all work, whether in or out of official hours, for which they are given, and do not form an integral part of the rate of salary, on which a rate of overtime payment can be equitably calculated.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Arising out of that, am I to understand that overtime pay is less than scale pay earned day by day?

Mr. McKENNA: These are extra allowances and not overtime pay.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Is it not quite clear that overtime is paid for at a lower rate than ordinary duty?

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir, it is not quite clear.

Agricultural Holdings on Crown Lands.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many agricultural holdings there are on Crown lands in England (excluding Wales) of the following size respectively: over three and up to ten acres, over ten and up to twenty acres, over twenty and up to thirty acres, over thirty and up to forty acres, and over forty and up to fifty acres.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1315 6.

MR. McKENNA: The number of the agricultural holdings on Crown lands in England, is as follows:—

Over 3 and up to	10 acres	...	147
„ 10 „	20 „	...	50
„ 20 „	30 „	...	18
„ 30 „	40 „	...	12
„ 40 „	50 „	...	9

(A number of small holdings in Monmouthshire have been sold by the Crown during the last two or three years.)

Army and Navy Meat Contracts.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any instructions were issued by the late Government that the supplies of meat to the Army and Navy should be drawn as far as possible from colonial scources; if so, whether these instructions have resulted in preventing British subjects who deal in foreign meat from tendering on equal terms with other British subjects who deal in colonial meat; and whether any additional burden has, in consequence, been placed upon the taxpayers of the United Kingdom.

MR. McKENNA: The Treasury has no information on this subject. I would suggest to my hon. friend that he should address his inquiry to the Admiralty and War Office respectively.

Prosecution of Passive Resisters.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have there been during the last three years in England and Wales, including London, for resistance to the Education Acts, or to any of them, or to their administration; in how many of those cases has sentence of imprisonment been pronounced; and in how many of those cases has the sentence been quashed or remitted, the term shortened, the rigour of imprisonment modified, or other relief been given in recognition of popular principle, the absence of moral criminality, or on any other than legal grounds.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I am not aware of any prosecutions having been instituted in consequence of resistance to the Education Acts. There have of course been many cases of refusal to pay the rates levied for the maintenance of denominational schools, but such refusal is not a criminal offence. The payment of the rates is enforced by civil process, and when in default of distress the defendant is imprisoned he is imprisoned as a debtor. The Executive Government has no power to relieve any person from the liability to pay rates, nor to interfere with the legal process whereby that liability is enforced.

Metropolitan Police Fund.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the balance of the Metropolitan Police Fund now stands at £711,155 14s. 1d.; whether that, notwithstanding this accumulated balance, the maximum rate of 5d. on the local authorities is still levied; and whether he will consider the advisableness of reducing the amount of the rate, having regard to the increased rateable value of London in the new quinquennial valuation now coming in force.

MR. GLADSTONE: The amount mentioned represents the balance on the 31st March, 1905, as stated in the accounts presented to Parliament; but the overdrawn balance of the Police Pension Fund has to be deducted from it, leaving a net balance of £533,196 0s. 2d. The balance of the Police Fund at the close of the financial year is always large, owing to the fact that during the last few days of March heavy payments are made from the Local Taxation Account, as well as by various Government Departments, for the service of the police. The amount so received during the last ten days of March, 1905, was £273,887. But at other periods of the year it falls so low as to be at times insufficient to meet the actual needs of the service: for instance, taking the current financial year, pending the receipt of the sum due on the January rate warrants the balance had disappeared altogether, and it was necessary to borrow money to meet the pay of the force. I will give the whole matter my careful consideration before the next rate warrants are issued: but having regard to the constantly increasing demands for augmentations of the force, I am afraid I can hold out no hope of a reduction in the amount of the police rate.

Aliens on Strike—Case of Hyam Goldstein.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Hyam Goldstein, a master, charged (with two others) at the Thames Police Court, on 2nd March, with committing an assault in a strike; whether his attention has been called to the remarks of the officiating magistrate, Mr. Dickinson, in refusing bail, and to the fact that, after Goldstein had been kept in custody for a week, he was discharged by the same magistrate, on 9th March, with the admission that there was a doubt whether he committed the assault; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have no authority to interfere with the discretion used by a magistrate in deciding when bail may be allowed. When the hearing of a charge is adjourned under Section 16 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1848, the statute expressly gives the Court a discretion in this matter, and having made careful inquiry into the facts of this particular case, I see no reason to doubt that the discretion was wisely exercised.

Railway Servants—Hours of Duty.

Mr. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he intends to introduce any legislation providing for a reform of the Railway Hours Act, 1893; and whether, in view of the hours still being worked on railways, he will consider the advisability of having each case reported where a man is employed for over twelve hours at any one time, as obtains in France.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am advised that the provisions of the Act of 1893 are sufficient for the purpose, and that the Act has been of great value in bringing about a reduction in the hours of labour, but if the hon. Member is prepared to lay before me his suggestions for an amendment of the law, I shall be happy to consider them. I shall be quite ready to move for periodical Returns which will bring out the information desired by my hon. friend, but, as at present advised, I cannot adopt the suggestion made in the Question. If he will read the Report of the Select Committee of 1892, he will find that that proposal was made but was not adopted by the Committee.

Foreign Tariffs.

Mr. MOND (Chester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state what tariffs, if any, of foreign countries are framed on the principle of differentiating between raw materials and manufactured goods.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I cannot attempt, in Answer to a Question, to lay down the principles which have been followed by foreign Governments in framing their customs tariffs.

Railway Superannuation Funds.

Mr. WARDLE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the deficit disclosed in connection with the superannuation funds belonging to certain railway companies, established under statutory powers granted by this House, he will consider the advisability of appointing a Select Committee to inquire into the scope, management, and present position of all such funds.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have no jurisdiction with regard to these superannuation funds. I gather that they are established under special clauses inserted in Private Bills, and I shall be happy to discuss with the authorities of this House whether any useful purpose would be served by the appointment of a Committee.

Trade Disputes.

Mr. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that many disputes, causing stoppage of work, occur because of the refusal of the employers or their agents to meet the appointed representatives of the workmen; and whether he can present to the House any record showing the number and extent of such disputes during recent years.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am aware that the refusal of one or other of the parties to trade disputes to meet the representatives of the other party has sometimes tended to cause and more frequently to prolong the stoppage of work. The records of trade disputes published by the Board of Trade only take into account the principal and direct causes of the disputes, and not the contributory causes or incidental circumstances, and the cases in which a refusal of the parties to meet has figured as the principal cause of the dispute have been comparatively rare.

Industrial Census.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is in contemplation to take a compulsory industrial census of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of obtaining statistics of the home trade of the country and the freight earnings of the British mercantile marine; and, if so, when the Government intend to ask for legislative sanction to this proposal.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The matter is under consideration, but I am not at present able to add anything to my reply to the hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 1st instant. †

Dearne Valley Railway Accident.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he proposes to hold an inquiry, under The Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, into the cause and circumstances of the accident which recently occurred on the Dearne Valley Railway now in course of construction at Laversall, near Doncaster, by which three men were killed and four others seriously injured.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I shall be very glad if my hon. friend will see me some time this afternoon as to what he wishes the Board of Trade to do in this matter.

Mercantile Seamen's Wage Advances.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps, by legislation or otherwise, so that merchant seamen shall have the right to claim that a portion of their wages, while they are away on voyage, shall be paid to persons dependent upon them for support, to banks, to trades unions, or similar institutions, as they may appoint.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: A seaman can already (under Section 141 (2) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894) allot half of his wages to a near relative or to a savings bank. I will consider whether it is desirable to extend the provisions of this section to trade unions, or similar institutions as the seaman may appoint.

House of Commons Post Office.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if a larger and more convenient Post Office can be arranged for in the House of Commons' Lobby.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): As I stated yesterday in reply to the hon. Members for the West Riding of Yorkshire and the West Derby Division of Liverpool,‡ I have arranged for certain measures to be taken under which the facilities afforded hon. Members in the transaction of Post Office business in the House will be improved.

Grants-in-Aid for Agricultural Land

MR. STARKEY (Nottinghamshire, Newark): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, inasmuch as the annual grant received by some unions is not now sufficient to cover the relief intended to be granted to agricultural land under The Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, he will take steps to have that Act so amended as to again ascertain the amount which should be paid to the local taxation account for distribution amongst each spending authority.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): As I stated on the 5th instant, in reply to a Question by the noble Viscount the Member for the Thirsk and Malton Division,§ I could not undertake to bring in a Bill for the purpose suggested.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1310.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 374.

§ See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 93.

Local Taxation Grants.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the present distribution of the grant on account of indoor poor under Section 43 (1 b) of the Local Government Act, 1888, which is still based upon the average number of indoor poor maintained during the five years ended Lady Day, 1888, and that owing to the variations which have occurred in local pauperism since that date certain unions and parishes suffer an annual loss on the grant, such loss being equal in the case of Poplar to a rate of 1·59d. in the £ on the rateable value of the union, while certain other unions receive a grant considerably in excess of their present pauperism, one parish in the East End receiving a sum of 4·3d. in the £ upon the rateable value more than it is entitled to on its present rate of pauperism; and whether he will bring in a Bill to provide an equitable adjustment of the grant.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware of the basis upon which the grant is made as required by the enactment referred to. The Royal Commission on Local Taxation recommended the abolition of this grant and the substitutisn of another for it. The whole subject of the grant must be considered when the Government deal with the question of Local Taxation, and in the meantime I could not promise to propose legislation with regard to the basis upon which the grant is distributed.

MR. CROOKS: Am I to understand that the question will be dealt with on the Equalisation Bill which the Government are supposed to intend to bring in?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I cannot promise that.

Lambeth Farm Colony.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the grounds upon which he has refused to allow the Lambeth Board of Guardians to purchase certain lands upon which to establish a farm colony, and for other purposes, in order to relieve the overcrowded state of the workhouse.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The area of the land which was proposed to be purchased is 567 acres. It is situated fifty miles from the parish of Lambeth and the price asked for it was £12,000. In a letter which I caused to be addressed to the guardians on 27th January last, it was pointed out that in addition to certain objections which had been previously indicated (viz., those arising from the size of the farm, and its distance from the parish), no evidence had been produced to show that the guardians had any definite scheme for using the land, or as to the number and classes of the persons to be sent there, and the means for classifying them according to sex, age, and condition. It was also pointed out that it would ultimately be necessary to provide extensive accommodation, including administrative buildings, and the appointment of an adequate staff of officers and servants, and that the history of experiments similar to that contemplated did not appear to warrant the assumption that the proposal would be likely to be attended with such a measure of success as would justify the large expenditure involved. It was added that the guardians would have no power to detain on the farm men who, accustomed to a town life, would probably frequently avail themselves of their right to take their discharge, and return to their old surroundings. It was for these reasons that it appeared to me that the proposal was one which I could not properly entertain.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Does the £12,000 represent the cost of the land only, or does it include the cost of establishing the colony?

MR. JOHN BURNS: The land only.

Returns of Local Indebtedness.

MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the character of the Returns that are periodically issued from Government Departments respecting the debt of local authorities, the Government will consider the desirability of issuing a general intimation to the effect that all future Returns shall differentiate between loans contracted for reproductive and unproductive purposes, or, alternatively, that the value of assets shall in every case be placed against the debt.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: The only Returns periodically issued by the Local Government Board respecting the debt of local authorities are the annual Local Taxation Returns for England and Wales. In these Returns separate particulars are given of the loans contracted for various purposes, including most, if not all, the undertakings which may be regarded as reproductive.

Butter Adulteration.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he has seen certain recommendations recently made by Professor Long, with a view of safeguarding the natural purity of butter in Great Britain and Ireland against adulteration with fatty substances from Chigago stock yards, commonly known as margarine; that, with a view of making analytical detection possible, it be made compulsory on manufacturers of margarine to use harmless substances, such as sesame or dehydrated starch, in its manufacture; and that any substance, chemical or preservative, except pure salt, should not be allowed in the manufacture of butter; and whether, seeing that this system of facilitating detection already prevails in Germany, Belgium, and other European countries, steps will be taken to carry Mr. Long's recommendations into effect.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: The suggestions made by Professor Long, to which the attention of my noble friend has been directed, will no doubt be considered by the Select Committee on the Butter Trade which has recently been appointed.

Suggested Legislation against Butter Adulteration.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY: I beg further to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the fact that the production of a warranty as to the purity of butter, obtained by the vendor from the previous dealer, is held to be sufficient guarantee of the good faith of the vendor, and that the liability to a penalty is sometimes thus shifted from one dealer to another, until it becomes almost impossible to trace the original offender, steps will immediately be taken, in the interests of pure butter making, to so alter the law as to facilitate the detection of fraudulent practices.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: I am afraid I cannot undertake to initiate legislation on this subject pending the Report of the Select Committee on the Butter Trade.

Precautions against Cattle Disease.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the United States of America, while admitting store cattle from Canada, have put restrictions on the importation of hay and straw as liable to carry disease; and whether the Board of Agriculture intends for the safety of our flocks and herds to restrict the importation of hay and straw.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: So far as we are aware, there are no restrictions on the importation of hay and straw from Canada into the United States, but hay and straw from European countries are required to be disinfected before importation is allowed. The desirability of adopting some similar measure in this country has frequently been considered, but the evidence of actual danger is not clear, and the inconvenience to the trades concerned would be out of all proportion to the risk involved. There is, of course, power to seize, detain, or destroy hay or straw in specific cases where there is reason to believe that disease might be introduced.

Denominational Teaching in Public Elementary Schools.

*Mr. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware of the fact that endeavours are being made throughout the country to induce the parents of children attending public elementary schools to sign a petition to Parliament in favour of the continuance of specific denominational teaching, on the ground, amongst others, that it is the intention of the present Government to abolish religious teaching altogether in the schools; whether he is aware that some pressure is being put upon elementary teachers to secure parental signatures to this petition; if so, whether any teacher who declines so to canvass the parents will have the support of the Board of Education.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I have received a large number of petitions, and I believe others are being prepared, asking that in any Amendment of the Education Act care may be taken to secure to their children the right to be taught the Christian religion as set out in the Church Catechism by Christian masters and mistresses and other teachers in regard to whom we may have some real assurance that they believe what they teach. No teacher has complained to the Board of such pressure as the Question suggests. Any teacher who declined to canvass parents would receive the Board's support, but the powers of the Board in this matter are very limited, and an aggrieved teacher would probably have a better chance of redress at the hands of the local authority.

The Mall Improvement.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state what price was paid by the Government in 1883–5 for the four houses north of Messrs. Drummonds' Bank necessary for the further widening of the opening of the Mall into Charing Cross; and what is the estimated value of the freeholds to-day.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The Answer to the first Question is £33,529. It would not be to the public interest to reply to the second Question, even if I knew the Answer, which I do not.

Clifford's Inn.

*MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General what is the present position of the scheme for dealing with the funds arising out of the sale of Clifford's Inn; and what share of the said funds will be devoted to providing legal education in universities and institutions in London or the provinces.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.) said that a deadlock occurred in connection with the scheme, owing to the objection taken by two of the Inns of Court. An amended scheme was framed with a view to dealing with the matter for immediate purposes. By that scheme half of the revenue of the consolidated fund would be paid to the Council of Legal Education and the other half to the Incorporated Law Society for the purpose of making further provision for the education of law students. In that form the scheme was now in temporary operation, and he trusted that before long some effort would be successfully made to effect a much wider provision which would result in creating a school of law, in which members of both professions might receive their education.

Stornoway Light Railway.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if, in view of the fact that the Lewis District Committee are unable to comply with the Treasury conditions for the construction of a light railway between Carloway and Stornoway, and on the 14th instant passed a Resolution urging that the Carloway new road should be completed and rendered available for a motor car service, he will state the approximate cost of completing this road; and whether the Government propose to put the work in hand at an early date.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I have received a copy of the Resolution referred to. The cost of completing the road was stated in 1902 to be not less than £10,000, but this sum might be quite insufficient if the road were to be rendered available for a service of motor waggons. There are no funds now available for the purpose.

Scottish Fishery Board.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the advisability of remodelling the Fishery Board for Scotland, by putting it on the same footing as the Local Government Board for Scotland, with the Secretary for Scotland as president, and a chairman and legal and scientific members, with salaries, responsible to himself and to Parliament.

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir, the Government have under their observation the working of the Fishery Board, and if any changes in the system seem necessary, they will be carefully considered.

Irish Collectors of Income-Tax.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what provision, if any, has been made to compensate collectors of income-tax, under Schedule A, in Ireland, for loss of poundage fees consequent on the sale of estates under The Land Act, 1903; (2) if he is aware that poundage fees for 1903 and 1904 are yet unpaid; (3) whether, in view of the promise made by the Comptroller of Inland Revenue to make good the diminution of poundage fees between the former and present collections, he will say how many claims were sent in; (4) if payments have yet been made; (5) if not, when will payments be made; (6) if he is aware that a clause was formerly inserted in the terms of appointment, providing that as the tax had been decreased, or increased, the rate of poundage named was computed to yield about the same remuneration as the previous year, and will he explain why this clause has been omitted from term of appointment for 1905 and 1906; and (7) whether he can say if the work of collection has been increased and the poundage reduced, and (8) if steps will be taken to bring up the salary to the amount it formerly was, and collectors be paid fair wages for the work they perform.

MR. McKENNA: (1) No general regulation has been made on the subject, but the Board of Inland Revenue have undertaken to consider cases of hardship on their merits; (2) poundage fees for 1903–4 have all been paid, and also those for 1904–5 with a few exceptions, where the accounts have not yet been finally closed; (3) no promise, other than that indicated above, has been made. In accordance with it thirty-two claims have been received in respect of the two years, of which twenty have been granted, three have been refused on the ground that the Land Act has made no material change in the collector's duties, and nine are still under consideration; (4) payment of the twenty claims admitted has been made; (5) claims cannot be paid until they are admitted; (6) the clause in question is only applicable in years in which a change is made in the rate of the income-tax; (7) the tendency of the sale of estates is to diminish the amount of tax to be collected, and therefore the amount of work in collecting. Poundage has certainly not been reduced, except when the rate of income-tax has been increased; (8) every endeavour will be used to make wages appropriate to the work performed, but until the effect of the Land Purchase Act on the business of the collectors has been more fully developed, it is not possible to fix a new scale of remuneration that will be appropriate to the new conditions that are in course of being established.

South African Committee of Inquiry.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is yet in a position to announce the names of the Committee of Inquiry which is to proceed to South Africa, or the terms of the reference for its guidance.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): My hon. friend the Member for South Huntingdon has also given me private notice of a similar Question. The Members of the Committee, which will proceed as early as possible to South Africa, are, Sir West Ridgeway, who will be Chairman; Lord Sandhurst, Sir Francis Hopwood, and Colonel Johnston, R.E. The last named member is already in South Africa. The terms of reference will be best gathered from a letter addressed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Chairman which I will lay on the Table to-day.

Trinity College, Dublin.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give the Return asked for in the Order Paper this day relating to the revenues and method of government and administration of Trinity College, Dublin.†

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not see any objection whatever in principle to accepting the hon. Gentleman's suggestion, but having regard to the fact that a Commission is shortly to be appointed to go into the whole question, and that all the facts and figures for which the hon. Gentleman asks will no doubt be brought out in the course of the inquiries, I think the authorities of Trinity College should not be put to the trouble of obtaining the material asked for and that there is really nothing to be gained by providing such a Return.

Purposes of the British Army.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he will now consider the advisability of carrying into effect the suggestion which he made to the late Government, on May 11th,‡ 1905, to the effect that an official Memorandum should be issued stating for what purposes the British Army is maintained, and what is the number of men required for the defence of the country and for its oversea obligations.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot trace any demand made by myself for an official Memorandum on this subject, though I did ask for information. I interpret the hon. Member's Question, therefore, as inviting me to give that information as to the purposes for which the British Army is maintained and the number of men required. The hon. Member and his friends were in power for ten years and they had all the advantage of a succession of War Ministers with fresh ideas and relays of energy. The Committee of Imperial Defence has also been in existence under the guidance of the late Prime Minister for two or three years. But the late Government appear to have been unable to arrive at and state publicly a conclusion on this subject. The hon. member now expects me after a few weeks of office largely occupied by a general election, and after attending four or five meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to do what the late Government failed to do with all their advantages of both time and talent. I think the hon. member must have patience for a little longer.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will consider the advisability of endeavouring to give this information to the House before it is called upon to discuss the reductions in the Army which were foreshadowed in his speech during the recent Army debate and were not contemplated by the late Government?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Gentleman may be sure that no time will be lost in the matter.

Ministers' Salaries.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the propriety of making an arrangement, commencing with the financial year 1906–7, by which substantial reductions may be effected in the salaries of Secretaries of State, Under-Secretaries, and other members of the Government, with a view to effect such economies in the public service as may help to provide sufficient funds for carrying into effect the declared views of the House of Commons.

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† MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Trinity College, Dublin): Return of Revenues and Statement of method of government and administration of Trinity College, Dublin, in the following form:—(a) A Statement of the Revenues of the College, and of the sources from which they are derived; (b) As to the Fellows of the College—their number; method of election; tenure of office; the duties and emoluments of each individual Fellow, and the sources from which these emoluments are derived; how many, and which of them, hold professorships or other collegiate offices; (c) As to the Professors—their number; method of election; tenure of office; the duties and emoluments of each Professor; whence are those emoluments derived; how many, and which of them, hold other collegiate offices; (d) A Statement of the method of government and administration of the College (distinguishing the duties of the Board and of the Academic Council), and of the number, duties, and salaries of the persons, other than servants, porters, &c., employed in the College; (e) A Statement giving particulars as to the four professional schools showing—(1) The number of Professors and Teachers in each school; (2) The emoluments received by each such Professor and Teacher; (3) The fees paid in each school for professional instruction; (f) A Statement giving particulars of the amount and employment of the Fund received as compensation for the Church livings of which the College was deprived in 1869, showing—(1) The original amount of the Fund; (2) The method of investment; (3) The employment of the interest of the Fund; (4) The present amount of the Fund; (g) What provision is made for pensioning Fellows and Professors and other persons in the employment of the College. How many pensions have been granted since 1870. Age, employment, and cause of retirement of persons to whom such pensions have been granted. How many of such persons are now living.

‡ See (41) *Debates*, cxlvi., 88.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not of opinion that the officials in question are overpaid for the duties they discharge.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will take the necessary measures to ensure that the salary of the President of the Board of Trade shall in future be fixed at £5,000 a year, and the salary of the President of the Local Government Board raised to £3,000, the salary of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board to be fixed at £1,500 a year, and the salary of the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board at £2,000 a year, in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee appointed by Treasury Minute, dated July 18th, 1903, so that the *status* and pay of the staffs of these Departments may be proportionately increased.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I believe there have been proposals for a re-adjustment of salaries, and the late Government announced a Bill for that purpose in the King's Speech last year; but the matter went no further. I am not prepared to promise any legislation on the subject during the present session.

MR. CROOKS: Was the proposal bracketed with the redistribution scheme?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has gone the same way.

Ministers and Company Directorships.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Secretary to the Board of Education is a director of the Tower Tea Company, Limited; whether the Secretary to the Board of Trade is a director of the International Tea Company's Stores, Limited; whether the Paymaster-General is the chairman of, or a director of, Sir Joseph Causton & Sons, Limited; whether these companies are private companies; and whether he has satisfied himself that these companies have not tendered for the supply of goods to any department of the public service.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am imformed that information as to the directors of companies may be obtained at Somerset House on payment of the very moderate fee of a shilling per company. Another source of information is a volume entitled "The Directory of Directors," for which I am afraid I cannot with the best will in the world claim to be an adequate substitute. However, as I am anxious to save the hon. Gentleman any unnecessary trouble and expense I may tell him at once that my hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Education is not a director of the Tower Tea Company, that my hon. friend the Under-Secretary to the Board of Trade is not a director of the International Tea Company's Stores. The company of which my right hon. friend the Paymaster-General is a director is a private family company. Whether the companies named in the Question have tendered for public contracts I do not know, but no doubt the hon. Gentleman can ascertain if he puts himself into communication with the various departments.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will define the private companies of which he deems it proper that Ministers of the Crown should hold directorships.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is impossible to give a definition in precise terms. What is meant is that class of company in which the interest of the Minister, if a director, is substantially the same as the interest of a partner in a business firm.

The Artisans' Dwellings Company.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will explain why the Under-Secretary of State for War has been allowed to remain a director of the Artisans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company, Limited, a company which has paid, from 1879 to 1904, dividends of 5 per cent. per annum to its shareholders, and whose ordinary stock stands at 111.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that the Artisans' Company is not an ordinary commercial company. It devotes the whole of its profits after paying 5 per cent. to its shareholders to keeping down the rents for the working classes who are its tenants. It, therefore, seems to me to be a philanthropic society, but a microscopic investigation has revealed to me the fact that a director does receive a very modest remuneration, and therefore I have advised the noble Lord to resign his directorship.

ALLOTTED DAYS OF SUPPLY.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London), remarking that some doubt still existed in the minds of a large number of Members whether Monday was to be counted as a day allotted to Supply—a Question on which point had been put by the right hon. Member for West Derbyshire on the previous day†—asked the Speaker for further information. He said the matter was of great importance, because the number of days allotted to Supply was limited under the Standing Order, and by cutting off one day great injury might be done to those whose business it was to criticise the Government. The Standing Order provided that a day occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of the preceding session should not be included in the computation of twenty days. He did not, of course, suggest that Monday was occupied by the consideration of the Supplementary Estimate then taken, but when he was responsible for the management of the business of the House he would have thought he had very seriously impaired the probability of this being a counted day if he had permitted anything but the financial business of the year to come under the consideration of the House. He would be glad to know definitely whether Monday was to be a counting day, although business had been done which did not come under that prescribed by the Standing Order. He quite admitted that the matter was a small one in so far as the actual time occupied by the Vote was concerned, for that time was insignificant, but the Speaker's ruling would be of great importance not only as regulating their affairs for this session, but also as regulating the manner in which this rule was to be worked in the future.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry I did not make myself quite clear yesterday. What occurred was that when the business of Supply set down for Monday terminated at 10.30 a number of Reports of Supply were taken, and among them was one relating to the Navy which was a Supplementary Vote of last year. If my attention had been called to it at the time I should have warned the Government that they were endangering the possibility of the day being counted as an Allotted Day. But nobody raised the point that day, and it was only on the following day that my attention was called to it. Now the rule states that not more than twenty days are to be allotted to Supply, provided that a day occupied by the consideration of Estimates supplementary to those of the previous session shall not be included. The Report of a certain Supplementary Estimate was taken on Monday, but I cannot hold that the day was "occupied" by its consideration, as the time occupied on it was not more than a minute or two. Therefore in my opinion it ought to count as an allotted day, although had my attention been called to the point at the time I should have recommended the Government not to press that Report.

TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) was understood to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the limited time devoted to business, the constant repetition, the redundancy of adjectives, and the fact that in ten minutes a Member could speak sufficient to fill a column of *The Times*, he would allow the question of imposing a time limit to be submitted to and considered by the Committee on Procedure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not noticed whether there is any Bill or Motion on the Papers of the House on the subject of a time limit for speeches. Personally, I am in favour of such a limit, and have often voted for it on past occasions. I do not know whether that is a subject of which the Procedure Committee will naturally take cognizance, but I will bring it to the attention of my right hon. friend the chairman of that Committee.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 398.

COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked when if the House would have an opportunity of discussing the interim Report of the Committee on Procedure presented that day.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the House certainly ought to proceed with the consideration of the first Report of the Procedure Committee in reference to the hours of meeting as early as possible, as the subject was urgent.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have to ask what is the business of the House for next week, and if it is proposed to take the Army Bill after twelve o'clock, seeing that it has only been circulated this morning, and it is desired that hon. Members should have an opportunity of considering the alteration which it is proposed to introduce.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On Monday the Workmen's Compensation Bill and the Trades Disputes Bill will be introduced.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Under the Ten Minutes Rule?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No. On Tuesday it is proposed to take the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill. On Wednesday we shall proceed with the introduction of certain other Bills; probably the Justices of the Peace (Qualification) Bill will be taken. On Thursday there will be Army Estimates to be followed by Civil Service Estimates. I understand that the Amendments to the Army Annual Bill are not of a controversial character, but it will not be proceeded with after twelve o'clock to-night if there is any objection. In view of the early rising of the House of Lords for the Easter holidays it is desirable to put that Bill through all its stages in good time.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he was very far from desiring to interfere with the convenience of the other House, but he did not know that in such a matter they need modify their own arrangements for business. Personally he had no desire to object to the Second Reading of the Bill, and might not feel moved to object to any of the details, but he had a lively recollection of the great difficulty he experienced when in office in dealing with this measure. He well remembered how Amendments were always opposed, and how he had the unpleasant duty of suppressing the zeal of the successive Secretaries of State for introducing modifications. He hoped the Government therefore was not attempting to force the measure. Was it proposed to take any other business that day?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Committee Stage of the Consolidated Fund Bill.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a stage on which there can be no debate. Will no other debateable matter be taken except getting the Speaker out of the chair?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, up to twelve o'clock if there is time.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to consolidate, with Amendments, the Enactments relating to Naval Prize of War." [Naval Prize Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for amending the Law relating to the Administration of Oaths for the purpose of Proceedings in Prize Courts." [Prize Courts Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Judicature Acts, 1873 to 1894, with respect to the Persons in whom the power of making Rules of Court under those Acts is vested." [Judicature Bill [Lords.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS (PROCEDURE).

First Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix, brought up and read; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89.]

NEW BILL.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

"To amend The Municipal Corporation Act, 1882," presented by Mr. Henry Vivian; supported by Mr. Russell Rea, Mr. Charles Fenwick, and Mr. Maddison; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 117.]

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.) said that as he happened to be fortunate in the ballot it was his duty to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the provision for education in Ireland in all its branches (primary, secondary, and university) is insufficient and unsatisfactory, and that the interests of the Irish people have been and are suffering most ruinous injury from the long delay in applying a remedy." Just one year ago it was his lot to move a similar Motion dealing with university education; and, though only a short period had passed away, he confessed the changes in place, position, and condition were as great as if a quarter of a century had elapsed. He was glad of the change so far as it brought into the House a progressive and radical force, from whom Irishmen could expect more friendly consideration for their demands; but there was one disturbing thought for those who could be called old Members, and that was the wonderful improvement in strength and length of the speeches of new Members, who were overshadowing those who were there before. He had the knowledge himself that his Motion was to be seconded by one of the new Members who would acquit himself ably; and these considerations altogether created an uneasy feeling in the mind that was hard to get rid of. He had been thinking, therefore, whether he would adopt the method of using a jolt of silence instead of the half-dozen kicks in regard to educational matters in Ireland. There were, however, so many points to be stated that he supposed he should tackle some of them, and leave it to his colleague to supply the deficiencies as might be necessary. He would not trouble to ask them to decide whether it was the highest or the lowest rung in the educational ladder that was most defective. There were opinions both ways, but there was absolute unanimity on all sides that every part was unsound. That was the view of the Irish Party and the view of the Members led by the right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. The opinions on this question were the same when the hon. Member for South Belfast riveted the attention of his Queen's Island followers upon it, or when the hon. Member for West Kerry discoursed upon it down in Kerry where the Dingle railway dragged its slow length along. Even the hon. Member for North Louth, whose seat was untouched in the excitement of the last election, spoke for his Party in no uncertain voice upon these educational topics. Therefore, they were presenting a united demand to a new Chief Secretary and a new Government that could not be denied and ought not to be delayed. If they took the equivalent grants for education in Ireland, what did they find? At first they were to get the Goschen ration of England 80, Scotland 11, and Ireland 9; but it was never observed, though a promise was given that it should not be varied. After a lot of disputing an attendance ratio was fixed instead, though if that were adopted at first the proporton would have been England 80, Ireland 10·8. England's population, however, went up and Ireland's went down unfortunately, and they had lost accordingly over £260,000 in the last ten years. Even in the last Estimates they did not give Ireland nearly as much as England or Scotland per head of population. To make matters worse the equivalent grant was merged for sinister purposes in what was called the development grant, in order that it should be diverted from proper and necessary purposes; and the late Chief Secretary made it a defence for using the money for other purposes that he was asked by Irish Members to do so. The money was spent on broken-down landlords and broken-down railways, instead of in building up Irish education as it should be. For whom was the system of education necessary to be built up? For the children of to-day who would be the men and women of to-morrow. 28 per cent. of those children were under seven years of age, and, without doing it decently or openly, or after consultation with the managers, the parents, or the teachers, they inflicted serious injury on them under cover of the simple title of Rule 127 (b). What cared the Lords of the Treasury for the preservation of that "nicety of feeling and reserve for which Irish girls were remarkable" if an opportunity arose to save money due to Ireland? What did it matter to them if the morals and character of Irish boys were depreciated so long as the means were at hand for effecting "savings" out of Irish education? Then, what about the other 72 per cent. of children attending these primary schools? Was the teaching staff sufficient? Were the opportunities reasonable? Could the clever boy or girl go as far as ability would entitle them? He thought to these questions there would be an emphatic "No" from all quarters and sections of the public. Was there a bit of character building in the primary system and its methods? Certainly the fault could not be placed against the teachers, but against the methods. Who had charge of the primary education of the country? The Commissioners of National Education—four judges, five clergymen, ten gentlemen of no occupation, and Dr. Starkie. It had often been pointed out to the House that they were not responsible to Parliament or to anyone. Their meetings were secret, and Dr. Starkie was their mouthpiece. How fitted he was for the post let the following facts indicate. He went down to Belfast in September, 1902, to traduce and misrepresent the Catholic managers of Ireland. He acted as a Catholic himself to give substance to his statements. He sighed for independent and educated Catholic laymen, and gave an example of what might be expected from them if they resembled himself. For the entertainment of a number of strangers he indulged in criticisms and suggestions on matters connected with education which had only an academic interest in it. He (the speaker) would deal with only one point. It was a sample of the value of the whole. Dr. Starkie made some quotations from inspectors' reports. In one case the quotation he gave was—

> "With a few auspicious exceptions, managers take no part in the working of the schools."

The inspector from whose report these words were taken—actually said two sentences before—

> "The managers, as a body, show considerable interest in the welfare of the schools."

Dr. Starkie deliberately omitted those words in order to discredit the Catholic managers of primary schools, and, as was shown clearly by Father John Curry, he was guilty of similar indecent and improper action of suppression throughout his address. Yet this shining example of truth, honesty, and politeness was the administrator in whose hands the fortune of the children and teachers of Ireland was retained. With him at the head of an unrepresentative and irresponsible board there was naturally no progress on proper lines in primary education. They asked that the national schools should be models of perfection, and yet, where they gave an English headmaster 30s., and a headmaster in Scotland 35s., the Irishman only got 20s. Where they gave an assistant 24s. in England they gave him 20s. in Ireland, and into the bargain made rules to destroy his position altogether. They asked the Irish teacher to be a paragon with a salary beginning at £56 for men and £44 for women, and they made rules that were servile in their spirit and intentions. They then laid down a system of grading as to promotion, which it was difficult for the teacher to surmount. The poor assistant teacher was left in a hopeless position. Little wonder that out of the 495 who left the teaching body in 1904 the number who emigrated or sought other positions was 188 and the number who died 172. For all this state of muddle and confusion the country had to pay for administration in Ireland 6s. 6d. for every 3s. 10d. spent in Scotland and 3s. in England. What the Irish people wanted to know was what plan of action the Chief Secretary proposed to follow to remedy these things. How was he going to construct a ladder whereby the child of ability, whether rich or poor, could go from the primary school to the University? The right hon. Gentleman had no right to ask Irish representatives for a plan. His Government undertook the administration of Ireland and the duty was theirs. Irish Members could ask the right hon. Gentleman, however, to state definitely if he proposed to reform the Board of Education and Dr. Starkie, and how he was to do it. They could ask him how he was going to deal with the equivalent grant and to secure to Ireland the share she was fairly entitled to. That was a most important item as, in the first place, while England and Scotland got their full share, Ireland was allowed to suffer; and even what Ireland got was given to purposes other than education altogether. Surely if the very pivot of the system was to work it could only be by offering decent salaries to induce men to work and to draw others towards the high profession of teaching. What was the right hon. Gentleman going to do about the pension fund of the teachers? The teachers had been led into believing that their future was secure, but the House would judge of the shock to the 13,000 teachers when they learned that though premiums were trebled and gratuities abolished twenty-four years service brought one of their number a pension of £4 6s. 8d. per year. It was not surprising to hear the Financial Secretary to the Treasury in the last Government admitting that there were cases of hardship or to see the late Irish Solicitor-General scratching his head to invent an explanation of his advice to the teachers that their bargain with the Treasury would hold good in a Court of Law. An English teacher got ten times as much in pension as an Irish teacher. The thing in all its aspects was glaring and unsound. How did the Chief Secretary propose to deal with this question of pensions they were all desirous to know? Then there was the question of the civil rights of teachers. In England teachers could become magistrates, town councillers, and even Members of Parliament—there was no limit to their legitimate ambition. In Ireland they could do nothing but endeavour as the rule said, "to be imbued with a spirit of peace, of obedience to the law, and loyalty to the Sovereign; and to avoid fairs, markets, and meetings, and above all political meetings, and abstain from controversy." The English teacher could have his intelligence widened by taking a proper part in every legitimate public duty. The Irish teacher was locked up in a circle of rules as ridiculous and injurious as could be framed. Would the right hon. Gentleman sweep them away and raise a deadweight from a body of men on whom an undeserved and improper restriction was placed, the effects of which were harmful not only to themselves but to the community? Imagine the absurdity of a rule which prevented Mr. Maher, the President of the Teachers' Organisation, from becoming a member of a local education committee, while third grade teachers in Birmingham could engage in discussions about trade or engage in municipal administration in Glasgow? When this question was last discussed the last Chief Secretary saw merit in suggestions about conveyances for school children, his predecessor saw a gleam of light in technical instruction. Something better than trifles such as these were wanted—something more radical than trifles in dealing with an important subject. He had now known three Chief Secretaries, and the other day he heard it said of them—

> "The first in plenitude of words surpassed,
> The next was no wise equal to the last;
> A third he came and this at least is true,
> He's surely better than the former two."

Well, now was the day and now was the hour for the right hon. Gentleman to take his courage in his hands. The other day he spoke to a deputation in the Irish language. Would the right hon. Gentleman now tell them that it was not merely lip service, but an indication of a real friendship for the Irish language and customs, and that he would do his part in restoring the language in the schools of Ireland to the place it ought to occupy? In London a few days ago he had evidence of the spirit of those who were taking the subject in hand, and they wanted some information from the Chief Secretary as to how it was to be treated in the future. What was the good of striving to build up technical and higher education on a bad foundation? No doubt, in spite of the efforts of the originators and administrators of primary education in Ireland, good had been got out of it, but that was because, as the Royal Commission said, Ireland had within its shores a people with a genuine love for learning and great natural ability. Why not give them the means and the facilities for exercising these qualities to the full? What was the good of spending thousands on Sir Horace Plunkett's Department, the only result of which was a controversy between the hon. Member for South Donegal and himself as to how much was spent in patronage? What was the good of making the existence of intermediate schools difficult by restrictions and drawbacks that were unnecessary and unwise? Without any notice they reduced the intermediate grant after allowing managers to go to extraordinary expense. The Intermediate Board said that there had been a fall of customs and excise—that was to say less drink had been consumed, and consequently Ireland was to have less money for education as she spent less in drink. A preposterous proposition surely, but not less so than many others similarly advanced in relation to Irish education. And when the management pointed out to the Board a means of relief their appeal was disregarded. Then just for the fun of the thing the Board withheld exhibitions to which in 1905 the middle grade were entitled, an arrangement by which he was told the largest intermediate school in Kerry and one of the best in Ireland lost £200 together. He might go on stating point after point about primary and secondary education, showing they were in a bad state, but they were not a bit worse off than higher education. It was admitted by every Chief Secretary that Ireland ever had, saving of course Mr. Jackson and the temporary Member for South Dublin, that University education was in need of reform. The present Secretary of State for War said last year—

> "It was an urgent question; and the condition of primary, secondary, and university education in Ireland was simply deplorable."

Well he had other urgent and deplorable questions on hand at present, but what had the Chief Secretary to propose to remedy the conditions described by his colleague? How far and how soon would he apply a remedy? One central idea should fix itself in his mind in dealing with these questions, and it was this—the Irish people preferred simple faith to Norman blood—or University education. It was no good trying to separate religion and education in Ireland—they did not want it and they would not have it. Wellington wrote—

> "If you educate men without religion you make them clever devils."

They did not want any more clever devils of the type of Dr. Starkie in Ireland—there was no room for them. It was all nonsense to say that because the writer of the immortal ballad of "Who fears to speak of '98" walked through Trinity, the "Traill of the Carson" was not over it all. The Catholics and Nationalists had not time to wait till they were dead for the benefits of higher education. They wanted it now, and whilst they would look with satisfaction on any effort to settle the revenues, the representation, and the regulations of the University of Dublin, they demanded an intellectual headquarters for the faith, the intellect, the language, and the literature of Ireland. They wanted the form of their motherland lifted up out of the ashes and the poverty where her beauty lay hidden and restored to her ancient position—*Insula sanctorum et doctorum.* They believed that could be done only by a revolution in the Government of Ireland, but in the meantime they wanted the pathways of progress cleared—the primary schools made bright and cheerful and efficient, and the teachers properly dealt with; the secondary schools developed and made suitable; and the University created on proper and necessary lines. The Chief Secretary could turn from the study of Bulgarian to Hibernian atrocities and at every point find them staring him straight in the face. The right hon. Gentleman might ask how could it all be done—where was the money to come from? He knew better than any of them the waste and ridiculous excess of Irish administration generally. Look at the lawyers, from the Lord Chief Justice, who could smile and smile and be Lord Chief Justice still, down to the Crown prosecutor in every town. His opportunities for reform were great. The police force gave him another field to reap, and the horde of Land Commissioners who, whilst ignorant of the difference between oats and barley, could easily detect the change from whisky to water, and every other department under his control afforded him scope to do anything and everything. Would he make the effort in a genuine and earnest way? If he did he would have the sympathy and encouragement of the people, who were quick to recognise friendly help when freely given. There was a current of opinion flowing in Ireland, deep but strong, between the banks on either side. It went towards the haven of a real Irish nation, and could not be forced back. Let not the right hon. Gentleman try any of the pitchfork pranks of his predecessors upon its waters; but sail along upon its bosom in the confidence that it would carry him onward towards solid ground, on which he could lay the foundations of a better and happier Ireland.

MR. RICHARD HAZLETON (Galway, N.) in seconding the Motion said it was a comprehensive one, covering, as it did, the whole field of education in Ireland. The statement it contained could not with truth be contradicted and the plea for reform which it put forward could not with justice be denied. This subject had been discussed over and over again in this House, and the urgent necessity for reform had been admitted by successive Governments, Liberal and Unionist alike, and yet little or nothing had been done in the direction of securing these reforms and removing the grievance which had so long hampered and restricted the progress of education in Ireland. The House might think that the fact that their grievance had been admitted on previous occasions—and no doubt it would be admitted again to-day by the right hon. Gentleman representing the Government—was to a certain extent satisfactory. He would point out that that fact was only an additional cause for irritation, because when the grievance was admitted on all sides they naturally and rightly expected that some effort would be made to remedy it. Until now the treatment of Irish questions in this House had seemed to him somewhat similar to the treatment meted out to a certain motorist not long ago who was summoned before a bench of hostile magistrates for driving at a greater speed than thirty miles an hour. He proved to demonstration that his car was incapable of travelling at a higher rate than ten miles an hour, but the presiding magistrate, after consulting with his colleagues, gravely informed him that although the bench admitted that he had proved his case they felt called upon to fine him 30s. and costs for loitering. When Ireland made an unanswerable case for justice, as she had done in connection with the subject of education, equally with other great questions such as financial reform and self-government, there had always been some excuse found for withholding from her that justice to which she was entitled. As to Irish university education, for instance, the present Leader of the Opposition, when occupying the position of Prime Minister, admitted the case for the establishment of a university in Ireland which would be acceptable to the great majority of the people. The right hon. Gentleman advocated it; he sent the great grandson of Lord Edmund Fitzgerald to Dublin Castle; he endorsed the appointment of Sir Antony Macdonnell under conditions which had yet to be fully disclosed; and yet he had excused himself from action on the preposterous ground that he and his Government could do nothing in the matter without the approbation of the little clique of reactionary Orangemen, who had no right to claim that they spoke for Ulster, or, as the hon. Member for West Belfast had shown, for the city of Belfast itself. If he had referred to the treatment which Ireland had received from the Imperial Parliament in the past, it was because he wished hon. Gentlemen opposite to understand that they expected something very different now. They welcomed sympathy when it was sincere, but they were not going to be satisfied with it. What they wanted was action. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech on the subject of old-age pensions the other evening enumerated a few of the chief things which this House had done since it came together after the general election. The House seemed rather to enjoy listening to a recital of its own achievements. Perhaps it was even proud of them. He would not presume to criticise the House on that score, but he hoped there would be in this House, so far as Ireland was concerned, a closer association of theory and practice, of promise and performance, than they had met with in the past. He would confine himself to the broad outlines connected with the question of education without going into details, financial or otherwise. His hon. friend who proposed the Resolution dealt with the financial grievance that primary education had been subjected to. He showed the grievances under which the national school teachers had suffered in Ireland, and he showed the non-representative character of the Board which controlled national education in Ireland. There would be no doubt that next in urgency and importance to some settlement of the University question which would be satisfactory to the majority of the people of Ireland, was the necessity of better provision for, and of a radical alteration in, the system of primary education. But over and above the University question, the primary education question, the intermediate or technical education question, and apart altogether from the details of finance or of systems or methods, there was one great question on which any English Government which approached this question had got first of all to make up its mind, and that was—Is education in Ireland to be controlled and conducted on Irish lines and in accordance with Irish ideas, or is it not? Unless that principle were conceded and allowed to be carried into effect, if it rested with him he would tear to shreds any University Bill or proposals for so-called reform which might be brought forward from any quarter of the House. Hon. Members representing Great Britain might or might not know that owing mainly to what had been called the Irish revival which had been going on in Ireland for the past decade, but was still in its infancy, the whole aspect of this education question had undergone a material alteration, amounting practically to a revolution. He did not expect hon. Members to understand the altered situation. He said that without any disrespect. It was one of the inevitable consequences, where one nation was governed against its will by another, and seeing that Irishmen had been trying without success for years to get the National Board of Education to understand this alteration, he was not going to attempt to explain it to this House within the short time at his disposal to-day. The fact remained that if in dealing with this subject the Government were to ignore that revival—he hoped and believed they would not—all their efforts and all their energies would be wasted to no good purpose whatever. There were, however, one or two points which he would like to make clear to the House. If there was one thing more than another which Ireland was absolutely determined on it was that for the future the education of its youth must, in the broadest sense of the words, be Irish and national. That under existing systems had been all but impossible. Anything that had been done in the desired direction had been done in spite of the existing conditions. The aim of the Board of Intermediate Education and the Board of National Education would appear to be not to turn out good Irish citizens educationally, but automatic machines ignorant of everything that concerned their own country, its language, history, literature, traditions, industries, and resources. He would give the House one or two examples of what he meant. Until quite recently hundreds and thousands of children were brought up in Ireland absolutely ignorant of the fact that there was such a thing as the Irish language, although it was the spoken language of the people to-day over vast tracts of the country. When the Gaelic League stepped in and succeeded to a limited extent in getting it taught in some of the schools as an extra subject, the National Board, in conspiracy with the late Government and with the Treasury, last year sought to stamp it out by withdrawing the miserable £12,000 a year which the extra teaching of Irish involved. Children who did not know a word of English were being taught by teachers who not only did not know but would not learn one word of Irish; and it was a common practice in many districts for the unfortunate children to be severely punished for daring to speak the only language they knew well or could properly understand. Examples without number might be given to prove all that he had put forward, and to show the rotttenness of the system which was miscalled education in Ireland. Although it might be said that things were not so bad now as they were, he said that the system under which such things were possible stood self-evidently condemned. The National Education Board had been tried and found wanting. It had shown itself to be out of touch with the sympathies of the Irish people. It had proved itself to be incapable of understanding the true educational needs of the country. No one had a good word to say for it. The teachers were against it. Their *status* and their financial prospects had been seriously impaired by the unfair rules imposed upon them in the performance of their duties. The school managers were against the Board; the parents and every public body in Ireland was against it; and he did hope that when the Irish Government came to make an inquiry into its action, it would also be against the Board. The money difficulty was the great crux of the situation. Education in Ireland had been starved for want of financial support. They did not want extravagant liberality in that regard; but only the purest financial justice which they had hitherto not received. They were, at least, entitled to claim proportionate treatment with England and Scotland. Not only, however, had they not received the money intended for educational purposes, but these moneys had been diverted into other channels. The Development Grant was the most glaring instance of that. Apart from the injustice involved in the distribution of the Irish Development Grant and the injustice done to Irish education, he contended that this financial juggling was a serious thing in itself. If a municipal body ventured to do the same thing, the long arm of the law would be brought down upon it by the Local Government Board, and if a private corporation were discovered employing such methods, those responsible would very soon find themselves in the dock, facing a very serious charge. It had been said that one could drive a coach and four through any Act of Parliament. That had been done in Ireland, not only in regard to Acts of Parliament, but in regard to the Constitution itself; but he trusted that such practices would not be continued under a democratic and Liberal Administration. This financial grievance clamoured for redress. His hon. friend had referred to the financial injustice inflicted on Ireland in regard to the case of the intermediate schools. They in Ireland had once been told that if they drank less their taxation would be less. He had little faith in that Shylock-like argument, because last year, owing to the increasing sobriety of the people of Ireland, the income from the local taxation duties for intermediate education had suffered a loss of £6,000. Was that an encouragement to sobriety? He believed that they could not have progress in Ireland without temperance; but he protested in the strongest possible manner against a system by which they could not have education in Ireland without drink. They asked that Ireland should receive the money, no more and no less, that she was entitled to for educational purposes. They asked that the present system of robbing Peter to pay Paul should cease, and that the money—their own money—intended for a specific object should be devoted to that object and no other. They asked that the education of the youth of Ireland should be Irish, and not, as at present, out of accord with the feelings and sentiments of the great majority of the people of Ireland. They asked that a change should be made in the constitution of the present non-representative and anti-Irish Boards of Education, whose conception of their duty seemed to be not to educate the children, but to flout, outrage, and insult the deliberately expressed public opinion of Ireland. So long as these Boards in Ireland, not responsible to any one but themselves, but always subservient to the whims of the Executive, were allowed to play fast and loose with these great interests entrusted to their charge, and with which the well-being of the Irish nation was so inseparably bound up, so long must true educational progress in Ireland be hampered and restricted and delayed. Finally, they asked that England should give them those facilities for higher education which were now withheld from their people, without which they could not hope to develop to their full extent for their own benefit and for the benefit of the land they loved those natural abilities and those intellectual gifts with which in such a high degree so many of them had been blessed. Or else they asked—and surely it was not an unreasonable request—that if the Government would not settle these problems for the Irish people, they would acknowledge their right and extend to them the power to settle them for themselves.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for education in Ireland in all its branches (primary, secondary, and University) is insufficient and unsatisfactory, and that the interests of the Irish people have been and are suffering most ruinous injury from the long delay in applying a remedy'—(*Mr. Murphy*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said that as an Irishman profoundly interested in Irish education and profoundly dissatisfied with the present system of education in that country, he wished to take part in the debate. He found very little to quarrel with in the words of the Resolution which had been moved, but he must say he found himself in disagreement with a great deal that had been said by the hon. Member for East Kerry. He agreed with him, however, concerning many of the grievances of the teachers, as regards their scale of salaries and pensions. He would add that they bore burdens which were not laid on teachers in any other part of the world. For instance, they were often obliged to contribute out of their small salaries £5 or £6 a year for the maintenance of the school fabric. Much indeed was amiss in primary education, more in University education, and most of all in secondary education. He could not, however, pass over the sharp attack which had been made upon two public servants of great distinction. One of these was Dr. Starkie, who by his courage and reforming energy had done more for primary and secondary education in Ireland than had been done by anybody else in the last fifty years. The other was Sir Horace Plunkett, whose signal and disinterested patriotism had been shown in a life devoted, without respect to party, to the good of Ireland. While there was need of reform in all parts of the educational system in Ireland, yet he thought that any thorough reform must begin at the top. It was from that point of view he wished to say something about University education. The moment was in some respects favourable in this regard, as there appeared to be in Ireland an awakening of new intellectual life, and a revival of that native love of learning which had been long dormant, but never extinguished. He went back first to the Catholic Relief Act of 1793, which opened the degrees of Trinity College to Roman Catholics. But that was only one portion of a great scheme. Had it been carried in its entirety, he did not think that they would have been debating the question of University education in Ireland to-day. A part only of that great emancipating measure was carried; still it was noteworthy that in the struggle for Catholic emancipation which followed, the representatives of Trinity College, Dublin, were among the supporters of the movement, and Plunket was its foremost champion. For fifty years and more after the Union almost every Catholic of distinction was educated at Trinity College, and with the tacit sanction of the Church. These included Judges, leaders of the Bar, leaders in medicine, and there was even one Catholic graduate of Trinity who became Archbishop of Cashel. During the first part of the nineteenth century it might safely be said that so far as the upper classes or the upper professional classes were concerned, religious barriers were being broken down and there was in progress a movement towards the fusion of different denominations. The effect of this on public life was a sweetening and a liberalising influence. He came next to the period beginning with the year 1845, when Sir Robert Peel brought in his measure for creating the Queen's Colleges. That measure was at the outset received with divided opinion in Ireland. Catholic opinion was divided, and even among the bishops many were in favour of it. The Young Ireland party were for it, and he would like to read to the House an extract from a speech by T. O. Davis, the poet, in reply to O'Connell's son. They were words which seemed still to ring in their ears the moment they touched upon the question of an Irish University. Davis said—

> "Will you take the boys of Ireland in their earliest youth, and deepen the differences between them; will you sedulously exclude them from knowing the virtues, the genius, the spirit, the affections of each other? If you do, you will vainly hope that they who are carefully separated in youth will be united in manhood and stand together for their country."

Looking back in the cool retrospect of history upon that measure of Sir Robert Peel's, he believed that a little more compromise in the House of Commons and also in Ireland would have given to the Catholics of Ireland a University education which they could well have accepted. He wished to quote some words from the eloquent and masterly evidence given by Dr. O'Dwyer before the last Commission—

> "I have no doubt from reading the debates in Parliament in 1845 that it was the intention of Sir Robert Peel to set up in Ireland in substance a system of education pretty much like that which we are asking now."

He went on to say that—

> "My present belief is that if we could get now at what was in Sir Robert Peel's mind, and compare it with the offer that Mr. Balfour has made, there would not be a hair's breadth of difference between them."

But the synod of Thurles in 1850 pronounced against the scheme by a majority of one, and when once the ban of the Church went out against the "godless" colleges, the condemnation of "mixed education" was carried out with strict and fatal consistency against Trinity College. Henceforth the religious and social cleavage in Ireland became more marked. Cardinal Cullen's influence, strongly ultramontane, accentuated the distinctions between creeds and classes. In 1873 already society was divided into two hostile camps, with, as some one has said, "clerical sentinels pacing up and down between them." In 1873 Fawcett's Bill was brought in. They all knew what that Bill was, and how it opened up all posts of honour and emolument, fellowships and scholarships to Catholics and all others. He would just like to add that it was brought in not merely with the acquiescence, but at the instance of Trinity College. But Fawcett's measure was too late to yield the hoped for results. And since 1873 the gap had rather widened, and the number of Catholics who went to Trinity College had been dwindling, and there had been a growing divergence between two ideals of University education—the Catholic and the more modern ideal. Chief Baron Palles, himself a Catholic and educated at Trinity College, had witnessed before the Royal Commission that—

> "The relations between Catholic and Protestant are not as cordial as they were some fifty years ago,"

and a Methodist witness, Sir William Whitla, said—

> "The early friendships which were often formed in olden days are now no more. . .and Catholic and Protestant youths are brought up without knowing each other, and with every probability that they will come to regard each other as natural enemies."

One could therefore understand why it was that in 1903 the latest offers made by Trinity had been rejected by the Roman Catholic authorities. The Board offered to provide religious teaching on exactly the same terms as it was given to members of the Church of Ireland and to Presbyterian students. They proposed that the teachers should be nominated by Cardinal Logue or by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. They consented to the erection of a Roman Catholic chapel within the precincts of Trinity College if sufficient funds were provided, and to grant similar privileges to Roman Catholic divinity students as the divinity students of the Church of Ireland. Cardinal Logue's answer was brief and decisive—

> "I can be no party to the arrangement proposed."

All this brought them face to face with the question, Could this breach be healed?

How singular was the contrast between the action of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland and its action in other parts of the world. In Germany the denominations met together within the Universities by means of dual chairs, separate faculties of theology, and other arrangements not unlike those now offered within the walls of Trinity. Formerly in the United States Roman Catholic students were, if not forbidden, yet discouraged from attending Harvard University. But within recent years the voice of the laymen and of the younger clergy became articulate upon this question, and now Harvard was as free and open to the Roman Catholics as any University elsewhere. It was not necessary to cross the Atlantic for illustrations. Let hon. Members look at what had happened at Oxford and Cambridge. Up to 1895 the same warnings were issued, the same perils pointed out to Roman Catholic students proposing to go there as to those proposing to go to Trinity. But laymen made their voices heard and after a severe struggle within the Church the petition of the laymen was granted, and young Roman Catholics have now free access to any of the colleges in Oxford or Cambridge. They were free to attend any lectures on philosophy or history or other subjects hitherto counted "dangerous." And he was told that the Church authorities were entirely satisfied, and said that the faith and morals of the students were in no way imperilled. A year ago he attended a Hibernian Club's dinner at Cambridge, where the undergraduates included Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics. They had a very pleasant evening. But he came away from the dinner in a state of profound discouragement and dejection, for two questions crossed his mind. One was this: Is it necessary that young Irishmen must cross the water and come to England if they wish to know and to understand and to respect one another? There in Oxford and Cambridge they met and mingled in one common life, engaged in debates, attended lectures, fraternised in clubs, and went back to Ireland better citizens and more patriotic Irishmen, because they had learned to understand one another instead of being brought up, as in Ireland, in a paralysing atmosphere of mistrust and misrepresentation. The other reflection that came to his mind was: Can it be right and reasonable that if an Irishman, had sufficient money to leave his own country and come to England, he should be able to enter an English University with the sanction of his Church, whereas if he attended such lectures in Ireland he would do so, if not under the ban of the Church, certainly without its blessing? Bishop O'Dwyer, when asked before the Commission whether there was any hope within a time that could be foreseen of similar concessions being extended to Roman Catholic laymen in Ireland, replied—

> "If it is asked is there any probability that within a reasonable time we will shift our ground as regards the mass of the Catholic people who want education, there is not the slightest probability of it."

In his opinion it was futile to attempt any solution of this University question which did not go on lines that would be approved by the Roman Catholic bishops. But in saying this he was far from thinking that the last word had already been spoken. He was not one of those who said, "There is Trinity College: its doors are open: if you will not enter, the fault is your own." They could not deal in that way with the religious sentiments of three-fourths of a nation. Nor could they say, "Wait till that sentiment changes." Ireland could not afford to wait. He himself had long hoped that within the walls of Trinity itself the solution of this problem might be found, but there were few, however sanguine, who would cling to that hope to-day. He accepted the facts as they stood and looked them in the face. But he still thought that this House ought not and would not despair of finding a solution, though it might be that hon. Members would have to modify and reconsider some cherished views of educational policy. Personally, he did not shrink from the words "Catholic College," or "University." For his own part in any scheme put forward he should look to one thing only, and that was whether in that scheme there was a hope of a University which would work on something like true

Mr. Butcher.

academic lines. The problem was one of paramount and pressing importance to Ireland, and ought not to be shelved. Outside Trinity College what was there for Irish Catholics in the shape of University education? They had the Royal University, founded in 1879, endowed with £20,000 a year. That University was a political makeshift which Lord Beaconsfield resorted to because he could not get a direct endowment for Roman Catholic education. It had two fatal defects. First it had a defect which was inherent in all purely examining Universities, namely, that examination was entirely divorced from teaching; and that in itself was sufficient to condemn the University. An incidental defect was that for some reason or other, rightly or wrongly, it did not command public confidence as regards its results. The second defect was graver, and resided in its constitution. Every senator who was a Protestant must be balanced by another who was a Catholic. The basis of the system was one of denominational equilibrium. It was strictly carried out, this curious principle of an even balance of religious creeds. At the head of affairs were two secretaries, one a Protestant and the other a Catholic, and the system was so perfectly maintained that there were two hall porters guarding the entrance to the University, one a Catholic, the other a Protestant. Besides, as the Commission pointed out, the influence of the Royal University had been one of "positive destruction." The Queen's University, which was a federal University, containing the three colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway, each college being an independent academic unity, was swept away, and displaced by a mere examining board. What had the result been? The classes in the Queen's Colleges had been depleted, sometimes almost to one-half, because residence was no longer necessary, and academic training was supplanted by mere coaching. Belfast had suffered almost as much from this as had the other colleges, and when he urged the need of remodelling the University system in Ireland, it was not only in the interests of Catholics, but quite as much in the interests of the Protestants of the North. The numbers in Trinity College had similarly decreased by the action of the same cause. The greatest disservice which the Royal University had done to Ireland had been to lower the ideal of

University life and education; in fact, as was summed up in the words of the Report—

> "Though created to meet the religious difficulty, it has neither solved the difficulty nor satisfied the educational needs."

There was one other point in the Report to which he would call attention. Among the evils due to the want of sufficient University education in Ireland were some which affected the whole social and administrative system in Ireland. They often heard of the dearth of trained candidates whenever the question arose of Roman Catholic appointments in Ireland. Sir Horace Plunkett, who gave evidence before the Commission, said that this particular defect met him at every point in his work. And from another side Bishop O'Dwyer argued that with the new social order in Ireland there was an urgent need of educating the leaders of the democracy. Perhaps hon. Members would recall some pages that were written by John Henry Newman in 1854, just after he went over to Ireland as rector of the Catholic University in St. Stephen's Green. Newman had turned his back upon Oxford, he renounced it, and said that he looked for a University in a more central position than Oxford had to show, and a country closer upon the highway of the seas. He looked towards a land both old and new; old in its Christianity, young in the promise of its future; a nation which had received grace before the Saxon came to Britain, and which had never quenched it. And turning his eyes towards a hundred years to come, he dimly saw the island he was gazing on become the road of passage and union between two hemispheres. Thither, as to the fountain-head of their Christianity, students were flocking from east, west, and south, all speaking one tongue, all owning one faith, all eager for one large, true wisdom. Those words were written fifty years ago. They might say it was only a vision, and perhaps with parts of that vision they might not all be in equal sympathy; but, still, was it not pathetic to think, pathetic to ask, what had arisen in Ireland since that day? What, indeed, except the fabric, the overshadowing fabric, of an examining body? Think of young Irishmen, with their social instincts, their spirit of fellowship, their genius for friendship, asking for a University, and being given — an examining board! Those in this House who looked back fondly to their college days were aware that they learned quite as much from one another as they learned from their teachers. It had been said that "men unlearn in this world what they learned in the University." True, indeed, it was that our store of positive knowledge in any department of learning was apt to run rather low as years went by; but there was one thing which men did not unlearn and did not forget: they did not forget the hours they had spent in human intercourse, in the rivalry of games, in the frank interchange of talk, in the invigorating discipline that came from the clash and collision of sympathetic minds. Nor did they forget, either, the value of their friendships, those friendships of youth, disinterested and unbought; nor, again, the sense of corporate existence which bound together the present and the past. Imagine what it would be if their own memories of college life gathered only round the examinations they had passed, or—hardly more dismal—those in which they had failed! He asked this House, in the interests of the young men of Ireland who were endowed with great gifts, and whose opportunities for using them were so sadly crippled, that, as soon as might be, it would address itself seriously to the duty of opening to them some better prospect of University education than an examining board.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) speaking for himself and all his colleagues, said that not for many years had they listened to a speech which moved them so profoundly as that just delivered by the hon. Member for Cambridge University. He believed it was the first time the hon. Member had addressed the House, and it was to them a touching thing that his first speech should have been a plea for his native land. Perhaps they might be able to draw a happy augury from the fact that no speech from the Irish benches, he thought, ever created more enthusiasm and profound gratification among them than did the speech which the hon. Member had just delivered. If the hon. Gentleman's colleagues sitting round him approached the subject in the same spirit, the task of any

Government in endeavouring to settle this great problem would be very considerably smoothed. The hon. Member was perfectly right when he said that in solving the problem of Irish education, which up to the present had proved to the British Government insoluble, they must begin at the top. They could not have any satisfactory system of education in Ireland until they solved this great question of higher education, and that was a lesson which had yet to be learned by those who approached this problem. He was particularly struck in the speech of the hon. Member by the moving and beautiful picture he drew of his own feelings when leaving the social gathering of Irish Catholics and Protestants in Cambridge, and when he contrasted with it the condition of feeling in Ireland. He would ask the hon. Member did it not occur to him that there might be something to account for that state of things in the social system and in the system of government of the two countries? It was quite true that Irish Catholics and Protestants, no matter how wide the gulf that might have divided them in Ireland, became friends the moment they left their own country and went across to England or to the Colonies or to America. The examples the hon. Member had given of what occurred in Oxford and Cambridge might be paralleled by what he himself had seen in the Colonies, in America, and in Australia of men in various walks of life. Was not that a matter which ought to set people thinking as to what was the cause of this spirit which lived among the people in Ireland only? The moment they left their native land the cursed spirit which divided Catholics and Protestants was exorcised, and, like all civilised and Christian people, they became good friends. Must there not be something in Ireland—it was not the atmosphere nor the colour of the soil—must not there be something peculiar to Ireland that was the cause of this? If the hon. Member looked into this question and approached the whole Irish question in the same spirit of sympathy, he would find that outside the University question, in the political sphere, was to be found the origin and source of this bitterness which had cursed Ireland. The hon. Member had said that he never could understand why it was that Catholics disapproved of a mixed University in Ireland, while they approved of it in England, in Germany, in Harvard. He might tell him that this disapproval was not a matter of fixed principle; he meant the disapproval by the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church was not a matter of invariable principle applicable to all circumstances. It was to a large extent modified and controlled by circumstances, and if the hon. Member wanted to know why it was that the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, speaking on behalf of the Roman Catholics, made the declaration which he had quoted, and which correctly represented the situation, the reason was, in his opinion, that the circumstances of Ireland, historical and social, had been such that, in the judgment of the Catholic bishops and of the vast majority of the Catholic laity, it would not be wise or safe for Irish Catholics or Nationalists to go into Trinity College or to avail themselves of the other mixed systems that prevailed. The hon. Member had quoted to the House the last proposal made by Trinity College to the Irish prelates and rejected by them. He had told them that Trinity College had offered to the Catholic prelates a Catholic chapel within the College grounds, that they had offered a theological faculty, not endowed by them of course, but paid for by the bishops, and certain other privileges to Catholic students. Yes, they offered these things, but they did not offer any share in the government of the University or College. They would still have left Trinity College and the University of Dublin in the hands of the bitterest enemies of the Catholic Church. That was the reason, and the all sufficient reason, why the prelates refused to accept the offer as a just or a safe settlement of the question. The hon. Member had also overlooked the fact that that very division which existed between Catholics and Protestants, which he truly said was worse now than fifty years ago, that very division which made Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants distrust each other, made it impossible for them to accept as a satisfactory University for their people a University which, with all its concession, still left the government of the institution in the hands of the bitterest enemies of the faith of the people. Trinity University was founded for the avowed purpose of putting down the Catholic faith in Ireland, and it had been true to that tradition, and Roman Catholics were asked to accept in satisfaction of their claim the fact that the doors would be thrown open, while the government remained for the next fifty years in the hands of men whose whole spirit was opposed to the Catholic religion. There was another reason which weighed with him, and in this he presumed he should not carry the hon. Member with him. The hon. Member had astonished him, he confessed, because he did expect a very different speech from him. He thought he would have shared the opinions of those sitting around him on the Opposition Benches and would have spoken in a bitter and hostile spirit. But although he had shown so broad-minded a spirit, he was afraid he should not carry the hon. Member with him when he stated a further reason why they declined to accept the offer of Trinity College as a settlement of the claims of Irish Catholics. Trinity College had been from its foundation the fortress of political ascendancy in Ireland. He would take this opportunity of congratulating his hon. friend the Member for North Galway upon delivering one of the best modern speeches he had ever heard in the House of Commons. The hon. Member had said that a new spirit had arisen in Ireland, and that they wanted education to be Irish and not a kind of bastard education imported from across the channel and applied by English methods to Irish needs. The Irish system was a bastard imitation of English education with all the life taken out of it. The hon. Member for North Galway was right when he said that this consideration was becoming more and more important. Irish Nationalists declined to accept Trinity College on the terms upon which they offered to throw open their gates to Roman Catholics because it was and had always been a political institution, the centre and fortress of all that was narrow and bitter and hostile to the national life of Ireland. With all the concessions which had been recapitulated by the hon. Member for Cambridge University, and if the Catholics were to throng into Trinity College to-morrow, for fifty years the enemies of the Irish nationality and the Irish race would be the masters there, and Nationalists declined to be under their government. The hon. Member had spoken truly of a great intellectual awakening amongst the young men of Ireland, but he had forgotten to say, or at any rate he did not dwell upon the fact, that that awakening was in connection with the Celtic revival.

MR. BUTCHER: I know that.

MR. DILLON: But what had Trinity College done for the Celtic revival? They had simply sent their professors before the Commission in order to cover it with contempt and opprobrium. They declared that the old Irish literature was indecent and that no respectable parent would allow his children to look at it. That was the contribution of the professors from Trinity College. On the Education Board, the Primary Education Board, and other boards where the Trinity gang were represented, they blocked the teaching of the Irish language and obstructed and ridiculed by every means in their power the settlement of this question in Ireland. For the last fifty years Trinity College had thwarted every attempt to improve Irish national life. He rejoiced that to-day they had a resolution which dealt with the whole field of Irish education, because on previous occasions they had been confined to one particular part of the question. Before he passed away from the question of Trinity College he wished to say that he thought the present Government was entirely too tender to that institution. He was much interested in the Chief Secretary's statement that he did not believe there was any person in Dublin who could pass the portals of Trinity College without emotion. As a citizen of Dublin he, himself, passed the portals of Trinity College every day when in Ireland, and he felt very deep emotion, but very different emotion from that which the right hon. Gentleman meant. He looked upon those portals as one of the last fortresses of political oppression and religious ascendancy in Ireland. Until that was understood the Government could not deal properly with the question. If the representatives of Trinity College would come forward and say, "We are willing next year to give half the government of Trinity College and the University of

Dublin to the Irish Nationalists," he did not say they would accept it, but still they would recognise the honesty of the offer. But so long as the government of the place was kept under their own control the offer was dishonest. He hoped that if a Commission was appointed to inquire into the management of Trinity College it would not, like the last Commission, sit for three years and then report in four voluminous Blue-books which he supposed not ten people in Ireland had read. He hoped that one of the chief purposes of the Commission would be to inquire into the position which Trinity College occupied in the whole scheme of Irish education. They wanted to know, no doubt, what was the amount of Trinity College funds and what it did with them. Trinity College had always shown a great disinclination to make the amount of its funds public. They wanted to know about the government of the College, but above all—and this was far more important—they wanted to know, and this House should know, what part the College played in the general education of the people of Ireland. It was absolutely impossible to have any settlement of the Irish education question until they had settled the University question, because, unless they had a genuinely popular system of University education, they could not have in the country men who were capable of carrying out every branch of education. They therefore required a popular and widely accepted system of University education if there was to be any progress in the matter of education at all. The general state of education in Ireland was most deplorable, and no parallel to it could be found in any other country in the world. The first thing that struck one was its enormous complexity. Here was a very poor people, in a very poor country, but the people were distinguished, as the hon. Member had said, by an intense desire to acquire education. A variety of education boards had been set up, overlapping each other, all with staffs of inspectors and secretaries, and of many of them organised on the preposterous principle that the boards should have on them an equal number of Catholics and Protestants, without reference to the capacity of the men. The one test for holding office was their religion. There were the Royal University, the Board of Intermediate Education, the Commissioners of National Education, the Technical Education Department of the Board of Agriculture, and the Congested Districts Board, all doing similar work, interfering one with another, and each with different ideas. In 1903—the last year for which there was a complete report—the administrative expenses of the Board of Intermediate Education amounted to £15,000, or £1 17s. 9d. per student, for the distribution of £7,000. Could there be a more extraordinary state of things than that? This was in spite of the fact that the intermediate schools were also operated on by the Board of Agriculture and the Commissioners of Education. It was a most deplorable thing that there should be this evil system in Ireland. He would quote one or two statements from the report of Mr. Dale and Mr. Stevens, two English inspectors who were sent to Ireland a year or two ago to report on the state of intermediate education. Mr. Dale said that their inquiries left them in no doubt that the desire for higher education in Ireland was greater than in England. That was a remarkable statement coming from an English inspector, in view of the fact that for two centuries the Government had put every obstacle in the way of the people acquiring education. In Mr. Dale's report he also found the statement that the desire for education was greater in the southern provinces than in Ulster. The number of male scholars in the superior schools of Ulster was 4,541, while in the corresponding schools in Leinster the number was 12,286, and in Munster 8,003. Yet they were told that all the education and intelligence was to be found in the province of Ulster. He quoted these figures only to show the extraordinary cruelty of the policy which put obstacles in the way of the acquisition of education by people who were so anxious for it. The next point in the system of intermediate education commented on by Mr. Dale was the deplorable want of co-ordination between the primary, secondary, and the university systems. There was no system by which a boy of exceptional ability could climb from the primary school up to the secondary school and then to the University. Mr. Dale said that this was peculiarly needed in Ireland, because the boys in the primary schools possessed in a remarkable degree that ability which fitted them for climbing to the higher schools. Consequently, because the parents of the boys were poor, the children were unable to go up the educational ladder. One of the most remarkable paragraphs in the whole report was that relating to co-ordination. The report stated that the problem had been solved by one body of men in Ireland, namely, the Christian Brothers. Was it not characteristic of the English Government in Ireland that it was the one body in all Ireland to which the State gave no assistance? The report showed how the Christian Brothers out of their own resources and funds, charitably collected, had solved the problem. Their schools were most admirable, and boys who were specially fitted for the secondary schools were advanced by a most perfect system of co-ordination. That was an illustration of the way in which education in Ireland had suffered by the policy of the Government. The Government had always refused to give any encouragement to these schools because the Christian Brothers, to their immortal credit, had absolutely refused to subordinate their system of teaching to the National Board or any Government interference. The Christian Brothers were perfectly willing to have certain inspection which would go to show whether their work was well done or not, but they refused to accept the cut-and-dry programme of the National Board. Because they stuck to that, and had the best teachers in the country, they were boycotted, and every effort was made to starve them out. They were therefore thrown back on collections from the people, by means of which, he was happy to say, they had been able to carry on their splendid work. The Agricultural Department had set up a system which clashed with the system of the Board of Intermediate Education in regard to science and art teaching, and now every schoolmaster in Ireland had at least two authorities over him, and he had to be continually consulting both as to the programme, the time table, and every detail of the arrangements of the school. From these two authorities the teacher drew his income. Now the Agricultural Department had taken over into its own hands the whole control of the teaching of science and art in Ireland, and since the Agricultural Department had done so they had succeeded in getting the programme altered so as to give a more favourable position to what they called science and art than had been the case before. At first there was a great deal of exultation over the success of the Department of Science and Art. He had never believed in it. He believed there was no greater danger to a system of education such as they had in Ireland than to overdo this system of so-called teaching of science and art in primary and lower secondary schools, at the great risk of undermining and destroying the really sound elementary teaching on which all genuine systems ought to be founded. And it was apparent as this had gone on that that was what had been done. He read in this report grand descriptions of the enormous advance of scientific instruction among the people, and how happy these young boys and girls were in the laboratories. He had had experience of laboratory working himself when medical student, and he maintained that it might be very amusing for children to watch the changing colours in tubes; but when they sought to substitute that class of education for arithmetic, reading, grammar, and a real foundation for education, he held that they were doing a most dangerous thing. He asked the Government to look more closely into these matters. They could very easily get up a system of examination in these so-called laboratory experiments which might look all very well; but at the same time they might be undermining the whole substance of the system. Therefore, when he read these reports showing the enormous number of young children passing in laboratory work he must confess he was still very sceptical and wanted to see how this was going to work out. There was another point—the secondary schools in Ireland under this system, which was condemned in this report, got their income by result fees based largely on a system of examination. He was convinced that that was a bad system. It had been condemned by the Board themselves. They decided that it was a bad system, and they called upon the Government to substitute for it a system of inspection. He agreed with that condemnation, because he thought the old system was unsound. But he wanted only to dwell upon the great grievance that had arisen in consequence of this system. He thought every hon. Member who knew anything about education would agree that it was of vital and primary importance that a school should know from year to year what its income was to be, and that sometime ahead. But what had happened in the case of these Irish schools? They never knew from year to year what the amount was going to be, and the consequence was that last year they suddenly got notice, actually when the grant was being paid, that the grant was going to be reduced by 30 per cent. The Board had denied that they had reduced it, but as a matter of fact they had reduced the *per capita* grant. What had been the result? Some schools in Cork had lost £500, others £300, and others £200 a year. How could any man conduct his school if he never knew from year to year what his income was to be? How could he engage his teachers? and what teacher having any real capacity would take service in a country where he did not know on the 1st of January what his income was going to be for the coming year? He asked the Chief Secretary to look into this matter and remedy the grievance pending a general settlement of the whole question. The Intermediate Board had put by, he was told, a reserve fund of £100,000. He thought they should have drawn on the reserve fund and paid the full grants and then told the Government what the condition of affairs was. The present system was one calculated to carry despair to the heart of any man responsible for the secondary schools in Ireland. They were starved; they were incapable of obtaining proper teachers, because there was no university in which to train them. It was based on a totally unsound foundation, because, when the intermediate system of education was being set up in 1878 nobody ever considered whether it was a good educational system or not: the only question was what political promises could be got. Therefore, they had a system condemned by every expert; and, finally, they added to all the other horrors the element of uncertainty. There never was a country which more required a really sound and well co-ordinated system of education than Ireland. There never was a country which had been more cruelly treated in regard to education than Ireland. Until a hundred years ago education was a penal offence; and people were alive who remembered that the schools had to be held in the hedges and that pickets were placed on the neighbouring hills watching for the approach of the police in case it should be discovered that the children were being taught. Therefore there was a great educational debt due to Ireland; and a great wrong to be undone. Yet when this Imperial Parliament gave Ireland an educational system it gave Ireland the most stupid and rotten system in the world. Again, they in Ireland complained that they did not get a fair share of the educational endowments, although as a matter of fact, Ireland, being such a poor country, steeped in poverty, ought to have been granted more than her proportionate share. What share Ireland got, if allowed to do so herself, she would administer economically. But the money which was given was wasted on extravagant Boards. Therefore, he insisted that Ireland had been peculiarly cursed in this matter, although it needed a co-ordinated system of education more than any other country. It might be thought that he was a Cassandra in this respect, but he held that there was nothing in the long list of Irish grievances, nothing which had struck a more deadly blow to the aspirations of the Irish people, than the way in which Parliament had dealt with Irish education. What were they going to do for it? Dr. Dale had said that the present system of education in Ireland was absurd and futile. All the Reports, including the last Report of the National Education Board itself, condemned strongly the delay that had taken place in making the building grants to the Irish National Schools. Practically thousands of these schools stood in need of such aid; and the Report went on to show that vast numbers of the schools were in a state of ruinous disrepair. Last year in July a Question was answered by the Secretary to the Treasury,† who in his reply said that the matter had been under consideration for six years, and that they could not come to an agreement, but that they were upon the eve of one. It was a fact however, that in the year 1902 an Inter-Departmental Committee was appointed, which reported in 1903. The Government would not, however, publish their Report, and for over six years they had been considering this subject with the Treasury. On 25th of July last the hon. Member for South Dublin said that the Government had made a special new grant of £100,000 for this purpose.‡ He asked the right hon. Gentleman if that was in substitution for, or in addition to, the £30,000 or £34,000 a year which used to be allowed on the Estimates for this purpose. The Chief Secretary seemed rather confused and could not answer the question offhand, but ultimately said it was an additional grant. They had never, however, since heard of either the additional or the original grant. He wanted to know what had become of the grant of £110,000 or the other grant of £30,000 or £34,000. Applications by managers had been sent in for four years and the only answer they had received was that the Treasury were considering the matter. He hoped they should also have some general explanation of what was to be done for Irish education, and he reminded the House that a former Chief Secretary sitting on the Front Opposition Bench said in 1904 that it would be intolerable if the English people were to allow any disparity to arise between the Irish and the English people.

*MR. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said he should not have ventured to intrude upon the House had he not been greatly interested in the subject of Irish university education, not only in private, but to some extent publicly. He deeply sympathised with the hon. Member for East Mayo who had described the grievances of Ireland in this matter, and how much Ireland had suffered from the want of a system of public education.

They felt the charm of the speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge, but he had been anxious to see in the course of that speech some practical way of putting the desires into effect. He himself approached the subject from rather a different point of view, but he knew that if he expressed his differences with moderation he should have a hearing from his hon. friends opposite. He instinctively and he thought reasonably approached the subject of Irish university education, and in fact the subject of Irish education altogether, just as he approached the question of English education, with an earnest longing for national unity. He had had it borne in upon him that any suggested solution which did not work in that direction did not deserve the name of a solution at all and had no pretence whatever to finality. What was it which in the history of legislation had precluded a solution and prevented finality? He thought they would all admit that the difficulty had arisen in what was called the cause of religion. If they were to draw their conclusions from the spirit and actions of a certain class of religionists they would be inclined to say that these men regarded as the primary and fundamental word of the Founder of their religion—

"I come not to bring peace on earth but a sword."

That seemed to be their first commandment. But it was a slander to say that that was the spirit either of the Founder of the religion or of the religion which He founded. The sword did not come from those who understood that in that religion all men were equal, but from those who were always craving for preeminence. It must be, and it was one of the perversions of the Christian religion, that warfare was inherent among its followers. If Churches had not fulfilled their proper functions in making peace among mankind, then it became the duty of the State to take up the much neglected Church rôle, to cast out preeminence by equality, and to assuage bitterness by civil companionship. There was nothing which tended more effectually towards peace and towards the solution of difficulties than mutual understanding, and there was nothing which tended more effectually towards mutual understanding, as Matthew Arnold said, than companionship in the same school or university. He believed the spirit of unity was abroad in England, at any rate among the laity, and this had spread just in proportion as the ascendancy of a particular Church was being modified. They were all most anxious that this spirit of peace and unity should pervade Ireland as he believed it had begun to pervade England more and more. Surely it must be the aim of every Irish and English patriot that Ireland should cease to be two nations and become one. The cause of this desirable consummation not having been arrived at was the failure of Irishmen, both Catholics and Protestants, to accept and to work out a combined system of education, and both parties had been somewhat in fault. In the great Irish Parliament of 1783 a petition was presented to the Irish House of Commons by Mr. Grattan, exemplifying that toleration which was so characteristic of him and those who worked with him, against the exclusion of Protestant professors and students from an educational institution then proposed to be created. The petitioners were Roman Catholics but they said—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cl., 616.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cl., 246.

> "The exclusion of persons professing the Protestant religion appears to the petitioners to be highly inexpedient, inasmuch as it tends to perpetuate that line of separation between His Majesty's subjects of different religions which the petitioners do humbly consider it is the interest of the country to obliterate; and the petitioners submit that if the youth of both religions were instructed together in those branches of education which are the same for all, their peculiar tenets would in all probability be no hindrance hereafter to a friendly intercourse, and that the petitioners having, in common with the rest of their brethren the Catholics of Ireland, received as one of the most important benefits bestowed on them by His Majesty and the Legislature, the permission of having their youth educated along with the Protestant youth of the kingdom in the University of Dublin, and experience having fully demonstrated the wisdom and utility of that permission, petitioners see with great concern the principle of separation and exclusion, then, as they hoped, removed for ever, now likely to be renewed and re-enacted."

The Catholic Bishop Doyle having been asked in 1825 whether he considered it desirable that the Roman Catholic laity should be educated conjointly with Protestants said he thought that it was desirable, if thereby the harmony of the different sects in Ireland could be promoted, and he added that professors of their own faith were not necessary if the students could receive religious instruction where they pleased, and, for those residing in Trinity College, there were sufficient opportunities on Sundays. When the Queen's Colleges were started one section of the Roman Catholics endeavoured to rally the country to the denominational cry, but the Young Ireland party, headed by Davis and Duffy, was against them. The Young Ireland party appealed to the spirit of national unity. A great Catholic educationalist, Sir Thomas Wyse, the Secretary of the Catholic Association, left behind him these words written seventy years ago—

> "To class our national schools under partial designations of Protestant and Catholic, and Presbyterian, is a contradiction. By becoming sectarian they cease to be national. By parcelling our people into lots, by thus keeping them *parqués* in their respective pasturages, we recognise a sort of inherent incompatibility; we tell the student that it is in his nature to live apart and hostile; we grow Protestants and we grow Catholics for future conflicts; and lest, if confided to their own untutored feeling, they should seek in religion only that in which all agree, we take care to point their attention to that in which each differs. We convert into a law of hate what heaven gave us as a law of love, and degrade seminaries for the universal mind of the country into rival garrisons for a faction."

In 1897 the late Mr. Lecky in this House, looking back to a long experience, gave utterance to these words—

> "There could be no greater misfortune to Ireland than that members of the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions in their early days should be entirely separated."

Let them remember that on one side half the Prelacy of the Roman Catholic Church, what might be called the Irish party, were in favour of these Queen's Colleges when they were started. The other side was headed by Cardinal Cullen. That gentleman was sent to Ireland when he had been thirty years in Rome, and, in the words of Bishop Doyle, was "intruded" into Ireland contrary to all precedent without the recommendation of the Church of Ireland. It had been the practice of the Papacy to appoint such Church dignitaries on the recommendation of the Church of Ireland. Cardinal Cullen, more a foreigner than an Irishman, was the head of the party opposed to the colleges, and it was through him that in 1850 an embargo was put on these unsectarian colleges by a decision of the Synod of Thurles, but only by a majority of one, an abbot irregularly introduced by the Cardinal.

He obtained on April 18th, 1850, a Papal rescript issued by Pius IX, in which it was stated it would be the duty of the bishops—

> "To frame rules to be everywhere observed for withdrawing the faithful from frequenting these colleges."

They might be forgiven, many of them, for looking back with regretful yearning to the policy of the Irish party at that date. It was something to remember that half the Irish Prelacy were in favour of the mixed education of Protestants and Catholics. That was the true Irish party. It savoured of Irish soil and possessed Irish ideas, and he would like to see such Irish ideas carried out. On the other side they had the ultramontane party savouring of foreign soil and having ultramontane ideas which had been the leading ideas in Ireland ever since. Curiously enough Pope Pius IX, who issued that rescript, supported a very different policy in America. When the two sections of the Roman Catholic Church there were quarrelling over the propriety of making a raid on the State for public money, Pope Pius IX sent over Monsignor Satolli to deal with the question. He calmed down the militant section of the Roman Catholic Church in America, and at the Conference of bishops and archbishops the following Resolution was passed—

> "That the Church of Rome does not disapprove of the public schools; that it absolutely forbids priests and bishops from excommunicating parents because they send their children to the public schools, or from depriving their children of the Sacraments because they go to the public schools; that so far from disapproving of public schools, it approves them provided they can be carried on in such a way that the moral and religious training of the children can be provided for."

Monsignor Satolli suggested three ways in which that provision could be made. First, by religious education by the Church in the school building out of school hours; second, by religious education by the Church not in the school building but in a building provided for the purpose, and, finally, where neither of these methods were practicable, then in the family. The same Pope sanctioned the entry of Catholic students at Oxford and Cambridge on the condition that provision was made at the universities for the religious supervision of the Catholic students. That was the principle for which he for one stood with regard to Irish university education—united secular education and separate religious education. He had been told in some quarters that such a system would not now be accepted, but it was not a question only of what would be accepted, there was also the question of what could be justly offered. Equality was always just, and those who rejected equality took upon themselves the responsibility of their refusal and the result of a demand for special treatment, namely, the separation of citizens. It was continually said in Ireland that conscience prevented students going to the Queen's Colleges, but he could not understand how that could be when half the bishops at the Synod of Thurles were in favour of their going. He could not help thinking that if the proposal had been carried into effect to establish religious residences, under the charge of Catholic Superiors, for the Catholic students attending those colleges, the educational problem would have been very largely solved. The Bishop of Limerick, when before the Royal Commission in 1901, said the prohibition of the attendance of Catholic students at the Queen's Colleges was not exactly a prohibition, but a warning that the colleges were dangerous places. On the question of conscience he said it was not so much a matter of the individual conscience as an objection to a system for the whole country. If it had been a matter of individual conscience, then an absolute prohibition would have been issued. With regard to the Oxford and Cambridge Universities the Bishop said that the student minimised the risk by his own personal precautions. The objectors to these Queen's Colleges had been challenged to produce evidence that they had perverted a single student from the faith, and they had failed to do so. The only instance that had been brought forward was a case which had resulted from private conversation, and a private conversation might take place anywhere. The head of the Jesuit College in Dublin, Father Delany, took credit, and rightly, for the fact that Protestants attended the classes of his college. When he was asked how that was, he said that their public teaching was not connected with Roman Catholic doctrine. When he was asked how they provided for definite Catholic training, he said: "Oh, we provide for that at another time." Then what difference was there between the Catholic College on St. Stephen's Green in its public teaching and the Queen's Colleges in their public teaching? The difference lay here, it was not in the teaching of the teachers, but in the authority that appointed them. The Crown appointed the professors in the Queen's Colleges, and the Church appointed the professors at the Jesuit College, and it came out in the evidence before the Commission that in the appointment, or the warning, or the dismissal of professors at a Catholic university, the archbishops would be the final court of appeal as to a question of faith and morals. But the scope of faith and morals was a very wide scope. Cardinal Cullen, in a letter to the clergy dated November 26th, 1850, said that the Divine commission to the episcopacy included faith and morals, but these had a—

> "direct or indirect connection with the various departments of human knowledge, and the exercise of the Divine commission must consequently extend to the supervision and control of every system of education proposed or instituted for Catholics."

That claim was said by some Catholics to be no longer advanced, but if so, why was the embargo upon the unsectarian colleges still maintained? This policy was not the policy of the Irish party of bishops, but the policy of Cardinal Cullen, backed by Rome, and whilst he would not venture to ask whether that policy was wise, he would ask whether it was national and unifying. Experience had shown that, so far as faith and morals were concerned, it was unnecessary. He did not regard Trinity College, Dublin, as yet national, in spite of the fact that the tests had been abolished, any more than he regarded Oxford and Cambridge as altogether national. Trinity College, Dublin, was too definitely Protestant and Anglican. Oxford and Cambridge were too distinctly Anglican, though he would rather hesitate to say, in addition, they were always too definitely Protestant. But, so far as Oxford and Cambridge had been changed in their atmosphere and in the conduct of university affairs—it had been largely because they had not been boycotted by the Nonconformists, who had gone pluckily to those universities and taken the risks. He did not for a moment believe in the Protestantisation of Trinity College, nor did he believe in its Catholicisation. Protestantism and Catholicism should be, in his view, two things entirely outside university recognition. Neutrality was not Protestantism any more than Undenominationalism was Nonconformity. A university was a place where all could be taught on equal terms. Without equality there could be no finality in any educational legislation. What was equality? It was—

> "[the realisation of] the principle which gives equal privilege to all men, irrespective of their creed, and refuses to give privilege to any man because of his creed."

That was the definition given in the course of a very striking piece of evidence before the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland by the right hon. Thomas Sinclair. He had been told that what he (Mr. Massie) desired was a dream. All he had to say was that he must go on dreaming still, in the hope that in time his dream would come to pass; and meanwhile he could not support any plan which put the fulfilment of that dream into the dimmer distance. And so he, and those who agreed with him, must go on working for that happy day for national unity in Ireland when the divisive policy of Cardinal Cullen should be abandoned, and, in harmony with the views of Bishop Doyle, the Irish party, and Young Ireland, a system of education should be established which should be a uniting ground for all the youth of that great country.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said the question of Irish university education had arisen upon many ocasions in this House since he had had the honour of being a Member, and he was afraid it was a great many years ago since he first ventured to address the House upon this subject as Member for Trinity College—which always came necessarily into these debates—and said that, so far as he was concerned, although it might not be his own ideal, this House ought to face the real facts as they stood in regard to university education in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had ideas with which a great many might possibly agree; he dreamt the dream of taking away religious teaching altogether from the Universities of Ireland; he saw the youth of Ireland, Protestant and Catholic, growing up together, learning the same lessons, reading the same literature, and exchanging their ideas in the class room and on the cricket field; and he said: "Let us bring about national unity." That was a consummation they would all desire. That was a solution they would all devoutly hope for, because it was to that stage of men's lives, by intercourse one with another, whatever might have been their earlier associations, that they learnt to respect the views of those who differed from them, and the necessity of modifying the extremity of their own views. But there was no use in talking of that as an ideal for Ireland, for the simple reason that the majority of the Irish people would not have it. The hon. Member for the Cricklade division of Wiltshire had spoken of the Queen's Colleges. The Queen's Colleges were established as absolutely undenominational, and were promptly described as "godless colleges," of which the Irish people would have none. What was the good of going back to a system which had absolutely failed in Ireland? No progress would be made on this question by such violent attacks as the hon. Member for East Mayo had made on Trinity College. His description of it as the bitterest enemy of the Irish people was without any justification. A considerable percentage of the students at Trinity College had come there, notwithstanding the discouragement of their own church, amounting to 10 per cent. of the whole of the students. Had any instance ever yet been brought forward, since Trinity College was thrown open at the commencement of last century to Catholic students, of either the faith or morals of any student having been in the slightest degree interfered with? He had himself made many Catholic friends there, and, although they had differed since, not merely in religion, but fiercely in politics, they had remained his friends. If it was an historical fact that Trinity College was established 300 years ago with a design to put down the hon. Member for East Mayo's religion, was it not all the more to its credit that it should have been the first of the Universities to ask that its doors should be thrown open to Roman Catholics? A full generation, moreover, had now elapsed since its prizes, Fellowships, and even a share in the management had been thrown open to the hon. Member's co-religionists. Was anything to be gained, or any approach to a settlement of this question to be reached, by harking back to the past, with bitter attacks upon an institution which, so far as Trinity College was concerned, had at all events for the last fifty years been only too anxious heartily to welcome Roman Catholics? Trinity College had made further offers. It had offered to the Roman Catholics to pay for sectarian teaching according to their religion by persons chosen by the Roman Catholics themselves to the students who came within the walls of Trinity College. They offered also, if they so pleased, to have a Catholic dean in residence within the college. Trinity College could do no more than they had done, because they had offered to the Catholics exactly the same equality as the Protestants of various sections enjoyed within the walls of that institution. The hon. Member for East Mayo had said that even if they eliminated the religious question he would still object to Trinity College because it was hostile to the national life of Ireland. He did not know exactly what the hon. Member meant by that phrase. If he meant that the majority of the students in the college were Protestants and Unionists his statement was perfectly true. But why were the majority of the students Protestants and Unionists? For the simple reason that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy would not allow the Roman Catholic population to go there and the Nationalists would not allow the Nationalists to go there. Could anything be more unfair than to say that in Trinity College the majority were Protestants and Unionists without stating the reason? It was the Roman Catholics themselves who had brought about the very matter of which they complained. If tomorrow the ban was withdrawn and the Roman Catholic youth of Ireland were allowed to go to Trinity College, then in time they all—because they were dealt with solely on merit—would be just as much entitled as Protestants to obtain Fellowships, Professorships and a place in the management. There was nothing to prevent the whole Board of the College in the course of time being a Catholic Board under the system which prevailed. It was true that if Catholic students were admitted it would take them a long time to attain to that, but anybody who knew University life knew that there was no other proper way of selecting a governing body than to select the members from its own corporation. The moment they departed from that system they got into the old difficulty that had been described by the hon. Member for Cambridge University, whose speech they had all listened to with so much pleasure. But even that hon. Member felt bound to ridicule the system which prevailed in trying to keep up the constitution of the Royal University Ireland.

The hon. Member for East Mayo had said that—

> "If Trinity College was sincere in desiring to get Catholics into the University, will you make us an offer to put a large number of Nationalists on the Board of Trinity College next year."

What a way to appoint the board of a University—to select politicians, and not members of the corporation of the University itself! In his opinion the fault of all the systems of education in Ireland outside of Trinity College was the fact—and it was a lamentable fact to have to state—that on every occasion on which a vacancy occurred in the management of the Board, whether elementary or intermediate, or University, as carried on by the Royal University, they had to consider not who was the best man for a particular place, but whether it was the turn of a Protestant or of a Catholic; be he an inferior Protestant or an inferior Catholic he must get his turn and they must put up with him in the government of the University. He was proud to think that the one thing in Trinity College that was never asked in relation to these matters was—What is your religion? [Laughter.] They might laugh, but it was the fact, and that was why the most distinguished men and the most hard-working men had always in Trinity College reached the highest eminence there. He remembered asking the late Dr. Salmon about the proportion of students, and he said he had never asked about the religion of anybody who entered the College. He asserted that in Trinity College the sole way in which a man could get on the board of management was by competitive examination, with the object of obtaining Fellowships and degrees, so that he could pass up by promotion until he reached the board. He certainly felt somewhat nervous the other evening when he heard the Chief Secretary announce his idea of an inquiry into the system of government in Trinity College, until he remembered that the right hon. Gentleman himself was a University man. He felt nervous lest there should be introduced into the governing body of Trinity College the idea of any selection except by the corporation and from the corporation themselves. What would happen if they were to put any portion of its government under the Executive in Ireland? They would go back to the same ludicrous system that prevailed in the Royal University. Instead of inquiring into the qualifications of a man, it would be the old story — whose turn is it, Protestant or Catholic? Therefore when Trinity College was abused as not being the great national University they would all wish it to be, let them face the actual facts and see what was the real truth in relation to the matter. It had a majority of Protestants and Unionists, but that was not by reason of anything in the government of the College, but by reason of the fact that Catholics and Protestants had not been allowed to work together. He had said this in defence of the University he was proud to represent, and he went back to the arguments with which he started. There was nothing they could do with Trinity College which would satisfy the demands of the Irish Catholic population. They were not satisfied when it was Protestant, they were not satisfied when they were asked to have it mixed by having all religions equally recognised and taught inside its walls. There was only one other alternative and that was to turn it into a purely Catholic institution. That was quite impossible. But they were faced with the fact that if the hon. Gentleman's ideals had not been fulfilled by undenominational colleges, such as Queen's Colleges were, and if Catholic Ireland had not been satisfied with all the concessions Trinity College had made, Ireland must go on with the present state of affairs. He was always being accused of being a bigoted Orangeman, but whatever he might be called he knew far too well the benefits to be gained from University education to wish to deny any solution that could be found which might be of benefit to his country. He had said on every occasion that the necessity for it, so far from decreasing, was increasing. Session after session they gave more control to the majority of the people. Since he came to the House great changes had taken place. They had set up a great system of local government in the country and a large number of offices, more or less under popular control and influence. These places must be filled by properly educated men, for it could not be expected that progress would be made in the systems they had set up unless they were prepared as far as possible to supply the proper means for carrying out such an education in the body politic of Ireland itself. He had always said that an effort ought to be made to secure some settlement of the question of Irish education. While he said that, he said also that there was no reason why they should in any wise interfere with Trinity College.

Mr. DILLON: If you will not block the way.

Sir EDWARD CARSON said he had never hesitated to speak of Trinity College as having no intention or desire to block the way. Trinity College had no intention or desire to block the way. For his own part he looked upon this subject as so important that he would rather lose his seat for Dublin University than oppose this demand for a settlement of the Irish University question. At the same time, there was plenty of work for Trinity College to do for the Irish people. They might want more practical schools, and a teaching more suitable to the larger class of students who went there now. The hon. Member for East Mayo had talked about the objections to an English education in Ireland, and had said he desired to have something different. He was not going to argue with the hon. Gentleman as to what was the best sort of education to give to Irishmen; but in Trinity College they gave an education which suited the class which went there not merely for the sake of preparing to obtain office in Ireland, but which fitted the students for taking the great part which they had hitherto taken in high offices throughout the Empire. They wanted to see that education continued in Trinity College for those who desired to take advantage of it; and they took no narrow view of the educational needs of their country.

*Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he had long watched in despair the languishing condition and the neglect of Irish education by successive Governments. It had been said that the reform of Irish education should be begun at the top. He did not much care where they began; but they must begin somewhere, and be quick about it. He, however, had a prejudice in favour of beginning at the foundation, and, therefore, he would direct attention to the condition of the primary schools in Ireland. The late Government sent over to Ireland a skilled English inspector, Dr. Dale, who made a number of very valuable reports on Irish education. In regard to the town schools Dr. Dale said—

> "It is difficult to give in words any adequate conception of the buildings which are classified by the Irish inspectors as bad. In point of unsuitability and unhealthiness they far exceed any premises which it has ever fallen to my lot to condemn in England."

Then in regard to country schools, Dr. Dale said—

> "It is also necessary to point out that in the country, as in the town, there exist schools which fall far short of the standard attained even by the worst schools in the rural districts of England. The schools at Keelogs in the Omagh district, Lakagh, and Kilmorgan in the Sligo district, are among the examples I encountered. They are old thatched cottages, with low roofs, broken floors and tiny windows. The ventilation was most unsatisfactory, and in the winter, when the door cannot be kept

open, they must be unhealthy. There were either no out-offices, or they were of the most primitive kind."

There had been a disposition in Ireland to dismiss Dr. Dale's report, as it was said that his visit was only a cursory one, and that he had the fatal defect of being an Englishman. But he would turn to the current reports of the Irish inspectors for 1904–5. Mr. Dewar, who was head of the Sligo district, said—

> "There are still, especially in the eastern and northern sections of the circuit, houses which are not fit to be used as schools. . . . These comfortless hovels are of one type. They have thatched roofs, which admit rain, uneven earthern floors, low walls, small windows, no grates, little space, rickety desks, few maps, no playground, and no offices. They differ little from the surrounding cabins, and if there be a difference the advantage is often on the side of the cabin."

Dr. Beatty gave a series of sketches of individual schools in the Ballymena district. Of school A he said—

> "No out-offices, school house shaky, sunken and adjoining graveyard; floor loose; ceiling low; both floor and ceiling broken; 90 on rolls, but accommodation for only 42; desks insufficient; nine children at a desk of eight and a half feet."

School B—

> "Accommodation for 41; maximum attendance 71; ventilation and light bad; whitewash urgently needed; maps, press, and teacher's desk old, worn and unsuitable; clock stopped."

Probably the clock was ashamed to chronicle time under such miserable circumstances. School C—

> "Walls and windows low; ventilation imperfect; desks worn and narrow; one broken and shaky; no clock; no ball-frame; no table; no modulator; no music charts; no drawing charts; no black board for attendances; no map of Ireland or British Isles; map of Europe small and without a roller."

School D—

> "Floor broken; no clock; out offices facing back door within a few feet; offensive smell in room; room dirty; floor not washed during the year; teacher thinks never washed."

He need not further labour this deplorable problem. The Commissioners said that practically a thousand schools in Ireland stood in need of having out - offices provided. Provision should also be made, they said, for the periodical cleaning of these offices, the cleaning of the windows and the scrubbing of the floors. They also said that they considered that all National schools should be provided with suitable seats, desks, maps and charts and with fires in the winter months. Leaving the question of the premises, he would take another highly characteristic feature, and that was the scale under which the Commissioners undertook the equipment of schools with apparatus. A first stock of school requisites was furnished gratuitously to each school in proportion to the attendance of children, and the Commissioners undertook to make a payment of 25s. for these requisites for a new school with fifty children. That was 6d. a child. In London for new schools there was allowed from 5s. to 6s. 8d. a child, but the Irish were fobbed off with 6d. for the first year. After the first year in London we provided 2s. 9d. additional every year, and every school hall had £5 for pictures alone. In Nottingham for the last opened elementary school 7s. 10d. was provided for school requisites in the first year, against the Irish sixpence, and 2s. 10d. was given in the succeeding year. Turning to the teacher, he had to face day by day a mountain of difficulties which were unknown to English teachers. He was confronted with grotesque and humiliating regulations which would never be tolerated for five minutes in any other part of the United Kingdom. What sort of man was the Irish teacher? He was the most fertile and resourceful teacher in the world. Mr. Dale said—

> "The Irish teachers whom I saw impressed me—with but few exceptions—as a conscientious body of public servants anxious to do their best for the children entrusted to their charge."

That testimony was in the Blue-books cordially endorsed by every Irish inspector. Then as to emoluments, the Irish headmaster received last year the average stipend of £100, while the headmaster in England and Wales received £151 9s. 11d., and the Scotch headmaster £176 14s. 2d. The Irish assistant masters received an average of £79, while England and Wales the average was £110 3s. 1d., and in Scotland £120 11s. 3d. An Irish headmaster was paid less than an assistant master in any other part of the United Kingdom. But that was not all. A charge was laid upon his slender purse which would not be tolerated by the school teacher in any other part of the United Kingdom. Mr. Dale stated—

> "In the country schools minor repairs seem to be more often done at the expense of the teacher; while the arrangements for cleaning the school are commonly left to him. In some cases the teacher pays a caretaker, but most small schools are cleaned by the older children with help from the teacher. The fuel—on the form of turf—is generally provided by the children or the parents, though, in a good many cases, the teacher has to make up any deficiency. In addition to this, the teacher has, in very many cases, to find money for the children's prizes."

In addition to all this, might he point out what was expected from the teacher? The Commissioners' rules in regard to school houses stated—

> "The Commissioners expect that all teachers shall have done at their own expense the following, viz., limewashing; cleaning and repairing glass; cleaning privies and ashpits; gravelling yards and walks, and keeping surface channels in order; sweeping chimneys; making good any damage arising from carelessness or neglect; maintaining fences and gates, except damages from lapse of time, and in case of residences built by grants for teachers of National schools, vested in the Commissioners of National Education, or in trustees. The Commissioners will inflict such penalty as they may deem adequate if the teacher fails to fulfil these conditions."

When he had done cleaning privies and sweeping chimneys, the Irish teacher was adjured as to how he should occupy his time. He was told—

> "To avoid fairs, markets, and meetings, but above all, political meetings of every kind; to abstain from controversy."

Fancy laying such a restriction upon an Irishman—

> "To be imbued with a spirit of obedience to the law and loyalty to the Sovereign."

He remembered that not many years ago, after a political meeting, at which Lord Londonderry, he thought it was, made some comments, the Commissioners issued a most fantastic rule for the guidance of teachers should they drift into a meeting where the topic might be of a political nature. It was laid down that each teacher present should be responsible for all that was said or done by all the other persons present. That was a pretty considerable order, but it was also laid down that the teacher must promptly disavow everything of an objectionable character which was said or done. He did not see how he could do it. The Speaker in this House would promptly rule Members out of order if they intervened in that way. The objectionable things included anything bearing upon political authority or any criticism of the Board. The public disavowal was to be followed by the withdrawal of the teacher from the meeting. If he followed this course of instruction he would probably have a brickbat thrown after him. But that the Commissioners would not, of course, mind.

As to what was to be done he spoke with some hesitation, as he recognised that we could not have the same system in Ireland as was applicable to Wales and England, and the converse was also true. He had read the Commissioners' Report, and for the first time in thirty years he found a sentence with which he could agree. It ran—

> "It seems to us to be involved in the legislative union, and to be a necessary consequence of the identity of taxation in Great Britain and Ireland that the Irish child should enjoy equal advantages, so far as education is concerned, to children in English and Scotch schools."

In spite of that pronouncement, however, everybody knew the deepening and widening of the disparity which was growing up. This was not only grossly unfair to the Irish child, but it robbed the British Empire of the fruit of its most fertile and adaptable and imaginative class of intellect. What ought to be done? First of all, more money was wanted, and then he thought the money ought to be spent more economically than at present. They should, he thought, overhaul the central executive authorities controlling public education in Ireland, which at present conflicted, overlapped, and duplicated machinery and wasted money. If they took a sovereign which was raised for education in England and Wales, they would find that 3s. was spent in administration; in Scotland 3s. 10d. was spent in administration, but in Ireland no less a sum than 6s. 6d. went in that way. First of all there were the Commissioners, twenty in number, who spent £1,500,000 a year, which was practically obtained from Exchequer grants. He believed that the House and nobody else had any control whatever over their proceedings, and of course they were entirely non-representative. Whom they represented

Heaven only knew. Then there was the Intermediate Board with twelve Commissioners and two assistant Commissioners, and the usual greedy army of officials. It was the most egregious body that he had ever come across. They developed higher education by paying grants on examination results and this system entirely perverted educational aims. They spent last year £85,000. They took nearly £2 a head to examine an intermediate scholar, although the entire elementary education of a scholar in Ireland did not reach that figure. Then with regard to technical education, when he turned to the appendices he found some very curious headings with regard to agriculture. For instance, "Scheme for encouraging the improvement in the Breeds of Horses." "Registration of Stallions," "Nominations of Mares," etc., etc. That no doubt was interesting and fruitful work, but he would scarcely call it technical education. He would sweep away the various central exective bodies which controlled public education in Ireland and substitute for them a single unified central council representative of the people of Ireland. By that means alone could they get educational co-ordination and administrative economy. He thought it was high time that the Irish people were associated in some way with the local control of the primary schools. There were already the beginnings of municipal interest in public education, and they should be developed. It was all to the advantage of the Irish child that the Chief Secretary was a man with a great and detailed knowledge of the educational advantages offered to the children of England, Wales and especially Scotland. He hoped his right hon. friend would, courageously and determinedly, do all in his power to secure the same advantages to the Irish children.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said it would be quite impossible in a debate like this to deal with the whole subject of education, and therefore he would only deal with one or two topics which he thought of importance.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

WATERFORD CORPORATION AND BRIDGE BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he rose to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. In doing so he must confess that his interest in this Bill was very recent. It was the cruel fate which another Bill met with in this House a few days previously which led him first to take an interest in the fate of this Bill. Upon looking into it he found the county council of the North Riding of Tipperary very strongly objected to this Bill and had petitioned against it, and on that ground alone he hoped the hon. Member for North Tipperary would assist him in defeating it. They objected to the cost of this scheme which would do them no good and which only affected the City of Waterford. They said, perfectly reasonably and fairly, that if Waterford wanted this bridge at all let them pay for it. The nearest administrative point of Tipperary under the control of the North Riding County Council was forty-three miles from Waterford and the country between that district and Waterford was intersected by very few roads Tipperary was in no sense in the neighbourhood of the borough of Waterford.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny Where is it at all ?

MR. T. L. CORBETT said that, the Members representing Tipperary in this House being silent and gagged, he was compelled to say something on behalf of the people of Tipperary. Waterford was not used as a market by anyone residing in the North Riding of Tipperary and the object to which this Bill was devoted did not benefit them to the extent of a single halfpenny. Why then should Tipperary be asked to contribute to the cost of an improvement local to Waterford ?

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Not a single penny is asked from the people of Tipperary.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said the people of Tipperary might be and could be called upon to pay for the freeing of this bridge. There was neither reason nor justice in the demand of the Corporation of Waterford. On what did Waterford rely for forcing through this unjust proposal? They relied on the Leader of the Nationalist Party in this House. Though the power of the hon. and learned Gentleman was very great below the gangway and upon the Opposition Benches, as was seen recently when a Second Reading was refused to the Rathmines Bill, the House would, he hoped, not allow him to carry this Bill. The North Riding of Tipperary was not alone in its plea for justice in this matter. The county council for South Tipperary had also protested against this measure, and in the petition which they presented against it, they described the Waterford Corporation as having been grossly unjust. Those were not the words of a Unionist district, but of Nationalist Tipperary, and he hoped the House would remember them to-night, and support him in his Motion to reject the Bill. He begged to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) seconded the rejection of the Bill. He said that there was only one bridge across the Suir at Waterford and it belonged to a body of Commissioners who objected to the Bill.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Oh no, they are in agreement with us and support the Bill.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Because under it the compensation to be paid was to be decided under the Land Clauses Act.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: That has been arranged.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: And they would suffer a very severe loss. If the Bill passed its Second Reading, he should put down an instruction to the Committee to insert a clause providing that the compensation must be so measured as to give at least 3½ per cent. or the capital sum when invested.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Thomas Corbett.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. JOHN REDMOND declared that the object and meaning of the opposition was explained in a paragraph in to-day's *Times*. At a meeting of the Irish Unionist Members, held at the House of Commons yesterday, Mr. Long presiding, a Resolution was passed expressing the opinion that the precedent created by the Rathmines Bill would paralyse the entire proceedings relating to Private Bills and that by way of reprisal on the Nationalists they would do all in their power to impede the progress of the Waterford Corporation Bill.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: On a point of order. That is not the case.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

MR. JOHN REDMOND, proceeding, said he therefore asked the House to judge of the *bonâ fides* of the proceedings. He reviewed the history of the bridge, showing that a Commission had recommended that a new free bridge should be built and that the courts of law had held that the Bridge Commissioners had exclusive rights to have a bridge over the Suir. A wealthy citizen had left a legacy, a new through railway had contributed £15,000, and they had obtained a promise of £33,000 from an old fund in the hands of the Treasury towards the freeing of the bridge; and they now came for permission to buy out the old toll bridge. They could not do so without asking the permission of the British Parliament, which had never even heard of the bridge. The Commissioners objected to the method adopted for fixing the price, and suggested another method, which they had adopted. The Commissioners had therefore withdrawn their opposition, and were in favour of the Bill.

The hon. Member for North Down had said that they were making a demand for contributions from Tipperary and other neighbouring counties. They did nothing of the kind. There was not a syllable in the Bill as to levying a single contribution upon anybody. The promoters were simply asking to be allowed to buy the bridge. It was an aggravation of the conduct of Members who came down to the House to oppose the Bill in retaliation for something with which it had no connection, that they had not read the Bill. This was not a question affecting merely the city of Waterford. It affected the whole of that part of Ireland, and he had had the pleasure to-day of meeting representatives of all the counties concerned, and not one of those counties was asked for a penny under the Bill. There was no power under the Bill to levy a sixpence on any of the counties in question or on any living being. Under these circumstances he thought it was an abuse of the forms of the House, that hon. Members, having publicly announced that they were doing it for the purposes of retaliation, to offer this opposition. He did not know whether the hon. and learned Member for Trinity College was interested in this, but he would like to tell him that it had been agreed to withdraw the provision in this Bill dealing with the fixing of price under the Land Clauses Act, and to substitute the Bridges Act. In that way the Bridge Commissioners had agreed to the Bill. There was no provision in the Bill to levy any contribution on the neighbouring counties, and all the representatives of those counties were in favour of the presentation of the Bill. All that the Waterford Corporation were asking was that they should be able with their own money to carry out the purchase of the bridge, and thus remove from that part of Ireland a great bar to its prosperity.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said from his earliest recollections he knew a great deal about this bridge, and he was rather inclined to say that he wished the bridge had been bought up before, and that there had been some greater facilities for passing over it. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had appealed to him in reference to this Bill. Might he say that his view was that all these private Bills ought to be allowed to be examined by Committees of this House upon their merits alone, and he rather anticipated that a good deal of the objection that had been raised had really been raised because in the past that which he had laid down as the proper principle had not been accepted by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. Some of his friends still had rankling in their minds what happened on the Rathmines Bill. [Laughter]. It was all very well to laugh, but it was a very serious business to leave a district without drainage because it happened to be a Protestant district. [NATIONALIST dissent.] It was the only reason put forward.

MR. CLANCY: Nobody gave any such reason.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The hon. Member for Dublin gave it.

MR. CLANCY: I absolutely deny it. I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to quote a single sentence to that effect.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: I can assure the hon. Gentleman I do not carry his words about with me.

MR. CLANCY: It is not the first time you have been offensive.

SIR EDWARD CARSON said that neither was it the first time the hon. Gentleman had said that to him. He really had been accustomed to him all his life. He wished English Members knew the hon. Gentleman so well. [Cries of "Order."] He did not feel the slightest ill-feeling towards the hon. Member—they were extremely good friends. After all, whatever might be their feelings about the Rathmines Bill, and whatever might be the irritation felt by the hon. Member for Dublin towards him, he hoped it would not last very long. He only hoped that in future Bills which might affect districts in which they were concerned would be considered by the House upon the merits alone. They could leave all these questions outside the pale of Party politics. He earnestly hoped the bridge in question would be freed, and with that object the Bill should go to a Committee.

MR. T. L. CORBETT asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time, and committed.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question 22nd March, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the provision for education in Ireland in all its branches (primary, secondary, and university) is insufficient and unsatisfactory, and that the interests of the Irish have been and are suffering most ruinous injury from the long delay in applying a remedy'—(*Mr. Murphy*) —instead thereof."

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. CLANCY said after the speeches that had already been made he did not think he would be justified in dealing at any length with the question now before the House, but there were one or two remarks he would like to make upon the subject of University education. He entirely agreed with the remarks of the hon. Member for East Mayo when he said that he thought reform in this matter ought to begin not from the bottom but from the top. It was too much the habit to assume that University education was intended for the higher or richer classes of the population. They had been for so long accustomed to the fact that the revenues, the honours, and the emoluments, of the great Universities in this country and in Ireland had been appropriated for the purposes of the rich classes that he thought many people had come to the conclusion that such an appropriation was in fact right and proper. For his part he thought that those who took that view entirely forgot the history of the University. The Rev. Charles Kingsley, in the original preface to "Alton Locke," drew attention to the fact that the Universities were founded not for the rich but for the poor, that the endowments of the Universities were provided by bequests and gifts of generous testators and others especially for the education of the poor, and for many years after their foundation it was a matter of fact that both the great English Universities were devoted almost exclusively to the training of the poor. In course of time that had been changed, and the rich had come to regard as for their own benefit that which was left for the benefit of the poor. It had been going on for so long that people now had come to think that that was the proper way in which University endowments should be appropriated. Ireland, being a poor country, took a different view. The majority of people in Ireland being poor they were the very persons for whom the Universities ought to be especially provided. It was no answer to this demand to say that they had not many students in Ireland to attend any new or old University, for they would have plenty of students if endowments were opened to the children of the poor just as they had been open for many years to the children of the poor in Scoland. He had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for the Cricklade division of Wiltshire with a feeling of despair. The hon. Gentleman was one who had presumably made himself acquainted with the history of the question, and yet he thought it right to give the House a re-hash of all the secularist arguments which the most advanced secularists in Enrope, Ireland, and Scotland had been advancing in vain for the last twenty-five years. Granting for the sake of argument that what he said about the bishops and priests coercing the conscience of the Irish on this matter was true, how much further did it carry them? Whatever brought about the present state of things—whether it was the bishops or priests, or the innate objection of the Catholic people to enter institutions which they regarded as hostile to their faith and nationality—the fact was plain that they would not go there. They were faced with a situation in Ireland in which the overwhelming majority of the Catholics, for one reason or other, were resolutely opposed to availing themselves of the benefits of higher education, and the question was not as to who brought this about, or the cause of this state of things, but how it was to be remedied. Did anyone in the House, even the greatest secularist, think it better that the people of Ireland should be ignorant than that they should follow the course that they had themselves selected? The secularist arguments did not carry the matter one whit beyond the stage which it reached twenty-five or thirty years ago, and those arguments, if prolonged until the Day of Judgment, would not effect a revolution. He would not refer to the religious difficulty, but he wished to draw the attention of the Chief Secretary to the fact that he as a Nationalist rejected the idea of being forced, as some of them had been forced, into halls of learning where the spirit of English oppression in the past had been the principal thing met with. When he was at Queen's College he felt he was in a kind of glorified police barracks. He felt the hand of the police on him. He felt the hand of the Lord-Lieutenant and his Proclamation. He felt the hand of the Privy Council in Dublin Castle. He felt the hand of the resident magistrate. He thought they all pervaded the place, and he made up his mind that if ever he had any children they should never enter an institution like that, to be converted by force, perhaps, into English Protestants. Trinity College, Dublin, was not only an anti-Catholic institution; it was also an anti-Nationalist institution. As recently as last Saturday when the Nationalist Lord Mayor of Dublin was having his annual procession through the streets of Dublin, the only place where any insult was offered to him was at Trinity College, where the students came out and threw mud and flour at him. That was the spirit of Trinity College, and that was the institution which the children of Nationalists were asked to enter. They would reject, and would always continue to reject, any such invitation. What gave this country at the present time the right to say to the Catholics of Ireland: "We offer you this because we think it right?" If there was a single thing in which every man ought to be supreme it was in that of the education of his own children, and it was not for any hon. Member who differed in religion and perhaps in politics to say: "You are wrong; we know better than you, and because we are stronger we will force our opinions upon you." That was not liberation according to his opinion, nor was it democracy. It offended against the just principles of liberty. They could not go into Trinity College because, in the words of the late Prime Minister, it was Protestant in every sense in which it could be. Catholics of Ireland asked for a college open to everybody who chose to come in and work for its honours, its prizes, and its emoluments. They might get there, if they wished, by public examination. There should be no tests, and on the governing body there should not be a majority of bishops. Start by making it as Catholic as Trinity College was Protestant, and they would be perfectly satisfied whatever happened afterwards. He could not see on what ground that could be objected to by the hon. Gentleman for the Cricklade Division of Wiltshire, except that in the botton of his heart and, perhaps without knowing it, he was going on the old principle of persecution, namely, that the Catholic religion ought not to be tolerated. He would give every man what he wanted in this respect. Those who were opposed to him would only give what they thought right themselves, and force that upon others. Such a thing was intolerable, and he warned the Government that any such doctrine might have a serious effect upon the political conduct of the Nationalist Party. He would not allude to the religious difficulty, but he would say that reform in university, intermediate and primary education must proceed on Irish lines, and not on anti-Irish lines. All these systems at present were from top to bottom not only anti-Catholic but anti-Irish as well. The object of them all had been the anglicisation of the Irish people. The whole system of education in Ireland—university, intermediate, and primary—

needed reformation. The education offered to the Irish people was essentially anti-Irish. Here was a verse which Irish children in the national schools were expected to get by heart—

> "I thank the goodness and the grace
>   That on my birth have smiled,
> And made me in these Christian times
>   A happy English child."

Here was their geography—

> "On the east of Ireland is England, where the Queen lives. Many people who live in Ireland were born in England."

The children were not told, however, that they lived in Ireland on good, fat salaries. Every other nation taught its history to the children of its citizens, but in Ireland Irish history was banned and forgotten. But the campaign against the nationality of Ireland had failed, because it was a fight against nature. There was, however, something in the soil of a country, something in being born on that soil and brought up on it and taking breath amongst its mountains, lakes and rivers, and something in the thought that beneath that soil lay the ashes of their fathers. There was something in the thought that they lived amid scenes of past deeds and past glories. It was this something that created within them a genuine spirit of patriotism and a feeling of love for one's own country, a reverence for its past, and a desire to help it along the path of happiness and prosperity. He believed most solemnly that if they could clear the whole of the inhabitants out of Ireland to-morrow morning and plant there a race of the strongest Protestants they could get from England or Scotland, in five, ten, or fifteen years at the most they would develop a spirit of Irish patriotism which would astonish the people of this country. Every wise Government in the world had recognised this spirit of patriotism, but in Ireland it was dreaded, and the love of Ireland, which was what was meant by patriotism, was confounded with hatred of England, which it did not mean. People often confounded the two. The patriotism of Ireland was a love for their country, which was totally distinct from that spurious form of patriotism which consisted of the hatred of any other country. It was this genuine spirit of patriotism which great statesmen for generations had sought to crush, but they had failed. They had now eighty-three Irish Nationalist representatives as against sixteen hon. Gentlemen who were still standing on the banks of the Boyne. With regard to the Gaelic League movement, it was conquering its opponents, who were being forced to teach the Irish language which they despised, and the thing was bound to go on. But to-day, as in the past, the education offered to the Irish people was essentially anti-Irish; that was proved by the fact that there was not a University College or any recognised school or class of Irish history. England taught English history to its children, and the children of France, Germany, and other countries were taught the history of their own country, and only in Ireland was Irish history banned or forgotten. What was the result? Had it been beneficial to England? Those who had been reared up in these anti-Irish institutions—had they become good Englishmen? They were bad Irishmen, but they were worse Englishmen. As a matter of fact they were citizens of no country, and there were some specimens of them in this House. He thought they had a right to ask the Chief Secretary to ponder deeply over this question and to insist that the Irish language should be taught in every school over which he had control. The Chief Secretary himself had written two volumes of Irish history which he thought might be put into the hands of Englishmen generally with great benefit to the Irish Nationalist cause. He hoped he would do what he could for the circulation of that book.

Mr. BRYCE: I may say that I have no pecuniary interest in that book.

Mr. CLANCY, in conclusion, assured the House that, speaking for the laity, they would refuse to avail themselves of any system of education, whether University, intermediate, or primary, which was anti-Irish and anti-Catholic. He warned the House that if they persisted in denying to Ireland what they wanted in this matter the result would not be to the political advantage of England.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I think we shall have a much better chance of making some practical progress with education if we separate it altogether from other considerations. I will, therefore, not allow myself to be led away by the undoubted relation of this question to political considerations. When I came down to the House this afternoon I did not intend to speak, but that intention was altered by the speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge University. All who listened to that speech must have been deeply impressed by its logical cogency and scholarly charm. He put the case clearly and well, because he did justice to the view sincerely entertained by many that a system of mixed education is better than a system of denominational education, and because he confessed that so far as Ireland was concerned we must abandon the hope of the success of mixed education, and consider the advisability of giving denominational education. Any hon. Member of this House who happens to have been Chief Secretary for Ireland in his day must address himself to such a subject as this with a certain amount of disability, for he lays himself open to the charge "Why did you not do something yourself?" My excuse, if not my justification, is twofold. The hon. Member for East Mayo referred somewhat pointedly to a speech I made two years ago, in which I stated that in my opinion there is a great and growing disparity between the opportunities for education enjoyed by Ireland and those enjoyed by England. The hon. Member for North Camberwell later expressed his opinion that if that disparity is to be diminished we ought in Ireland to begin by way of primary education and not by way of the University. For my own part I take the opposite view, and the view which I stated two years ago is the view I hold now. Time will not admit of my proving that there is a great and growing disparity between the opportunities for education in Ireland and in England. As a Unionist, the temptation is for me to gloss over that fact. My second argument is that while I was in Ireland three separate investigations upon education were conducted and no one who read those three separate reports can doubt this great disparity between the opportunities in the two countries. The hon. Member for North Camberwell said he preferred building up from the foundation. This metaphor drawn from architecture is altogether out of place in talking of education. Education must always start from the University. England enjoyed the advantages of University education for a thousand years before we thought of elementary education. If education is given by men who know what education is, that is to say, by men who have had the advantage of a University training themselves, then the advantage of that education will flow down and irrigate all ranks of life in Ireland, and I should expect greater things of intermediate and primary education. But until the opportunities for University education in Ireland are greater, it is wasting money to spend more upon the primary and intermediate systems. The hon. Member for North Camberwell dealt with primary education, but his arguments were directed more to matters of finance and not education, for he spoke of the school houses in Ireland not being good enough, and the teachers not being adequate for the needs of the schools. But that is not a question of education. As to primary education, which is acceptable to the people of Ireland it is cheap, but it is not good education. The intermediate education is not acceptable to the people of Ireland, and it is dear and bad. As to University education, I believe that that which may be obtained at Trinity College is very good, but it is not cheap and it is unacceptable to a great number of people in Ireland. In saying that I do not utter a word of criticism on Trinity College, which is a sort of sister to Oxford and Cambridge. Such a fountain of higher learning ought to be a source of national pride to any country, but it does not follow that it meets the needs of the great majority of the population. I will accordingly leave Trinity College out of what I am going to say, with my best wishes that it may in the future produce great Irishmen who will reflect great honour upon their country. The disparity to which I have referred is more obvious in respect of higher education than of intermediate or primary education. In England, besides Oxford and

Cambridge, there are a number of Universities of another type. You have a multiplication of Universities at Liverpool Manchester, Glasgow, and Sheffield, which administer to local sentiments and local needs. I hold as strongly as ever I did that the great need of Irish education at the present moment is that Ireland should receive facilities such as are afforded in England by Universities like those of Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. That is not an object which need evoke either religious or political contention. Would it injure Trinity College? If these needs, which are different from the needs supplied by Trinity College, are satisfied, that feud will be appeased, and I believe more Irish Catholics would go to Trinity, because the men who require that class of education will not be abandoning the cause of the men who require University education of another type. I think it would improve Trinity College, and I do not think any injury would be done to the existing colleges where undenominational education is given. I think they would be improved. As has been pointed out, undemoninational education has been tried and has failed everywhere except in Belfast. Mixed education has been tried at Trinity College, and has succeeded only partially. The problem is to provide in other parts of Ireland an education which is acceptable because it is denominational and within the means of those who sought to obtain it. That is a practical question, not a political or religious question. The plea for denominational education in my opinion becomes stronger the higher the grade of education. In elementary education, which is confined perhaps to reading, writing and arithmetic, a strong case can be made out for even secularisation, but when you come to the higher branches of learning it is only fair that the son of any parent should have the denominational view as well as other views of religion and philosophy placed before him. Hon. Gentleman opposite desire that education should be undenominational. But unless the education provided is acceptable and within the people's means there will be no higher education in Ireland in adequate quantity, and intermediate and primary education will be largely wasted. If the Chief Secretary attempts to deal with the question of Irish education I will do my best not to embarrass him either by what I say or by what I leave unsaid.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The debate has covered so wide a range that it will be impossible for me to deal with all the points which have been raised in the limited time at my disposal. The debate has been remarkable for some eloquent contributions from hon. Members who I hope will often join in our debates. Let me express first of all the pleasure with which I am sure we all listened to the vigorous and luminous speech of the hon. Member for North Galway. Let me also express my admiration of the speech made by the hon. Member for Cambridge University, a maiden speech which I have seldom heard equalled in this House, for it was remarkable not only for its elevation of tone, but also for its singular beauty. It is extremely difficult for me to-night to attempt to cover such a wide field, and I must apologise for my imperfect knowledge of many of the subjects which have been brought forward. I have endeavoured since I took office to acquire some knowledge of the extremely difficult and complicated system of education in Ireland. Perhaps the best thing I can do under the circumstances is to deal briefly with the points raised, and then pass on and express my views on the general question of education in Ireland. The first and certainly one of the most important is the question of teachers' salaries. There is no doubt that the salaries of teachers are inadequate. They are, as the hon. Member for North Camberwell pointed out, very much below the salaries of teachers in England and Scotland. That is largely due to a fact to which I shall presently advert—the small size of the schools. The schools in Ireland are very much smaller than the schools in England and Scotland. It is the more regrettable on account of that excellence of the Irish teachers to which the hon. Member for North Camberwell referred. Some years ago I had occasion, as a member of a Royal Commission, to inquire into the endowed schools of England, and I found that a number of Irish teachers were employed in them, and I was much struck with the excellence of their work. I was told how glad the people there were to get teachers from Ireland. It was because they had the art of throwing sympathy into their work, and getting the best work out of their pupils. The result is that the best Irish teachers are apt to be drawn away to England, as they can get better salaries and better chances of promotion there. Complaints have also been made as to the system under which money is awarded to Ireland under the Equivalent Grant, and the way in which money is taken from Ireland out of the Irish Development Grant instead of being taken from the National Exchequer. It would be quite impossible for me to enter into that dark labyrinth of the relation of Irish finance to the Imperial Treasury, and especially the relation of the Imperial Treasury to Irish education. Successive Irish and British Governments in the course of the last fifty years have tied a series of knots which it is almost impossible to unravel, and I do not see that anything short of systematic inquiry can clear up the difficulties. I can assure the House that light must be let into it, and that the whole of the relations of the British Treasury to the Irish educational system requires, I think, to be made more intelligible, more practical, and more conducive to the benefit of Irish education than they are at the present moment. As regards the question of salaries and pensions I must be content for the moment to say that I fully admit the teachers have a case for consideration. It does not rest with me, as the House knows, to grant the demand. These demands have practically to be settled between the National Board and the Treasury, and the Irish Government is somewhat in the position of Bismarck's honest broker between these two authorities. But the Irish Government will give a sympathetic support to the National Board in all it may do to obtain funds for educational purposes.

I pass from that to the question of building grants. There also, no doubt, there has been a great and regrettable delay. It happened very unfortunately that the matter was on the point of being settled when the late Government went out of office, and for two months after that it was impossible for the present Government to take it up effectively. I am glad to say, however, that an arrangement is on the eve of being made which I hope will put the matter on a better footing, and on the Estimates of this year there is a grant of £35,000 proposed for school buildings, and of that £5,000 is to be free to be applied in any way outside pre-existing arrangements to which the National Board may wish to have it applied. It is estimated that not more than that £35,000 can be practically applied within the coming financial year. At the end of that year, of course, further grants will have to be made, and I will do my best to see that those grants meet what I admit to be urgent and pressing needs.

Reference was made by the hon. Member for East Kerry to the rule which goes by the name of 127b. I cannot attempt to enter into detail in regard to that. That is a rule which is intended to secure that the education of tender children shall be chiefly conducted by mistresses. That is a point on which all educational experience in England, Scotland, on the Continent, and above all in the United States is in favour, namely, of having that education conducted by women, and I cannot believe that Ireland is an exception to the experience of other nations. The hon. Member for East Kerry went out of his way to make an attack on Dr. Starkie. Dr. Starkie is one of the most able civil servants in Ireland and I do not think anyone doubts his ability. Even the hon. Member did not doubt his ability, but he complained that Dr. Starkie had read a paper in Belfast in which he exposed somewhat freely the existing defects in Irish education. In regard to his statement to the British Association, I do not think that as a patriotic Irishman Dr. Starkie was debarred from stating those facts merely because there were some visitors from England and Scotland present. I hope on the contrary that what Dr. Starkie said there will have the effect of making visitors from England and Scotland realise how much England and Scotland ought to do for Ireland in educational matters. I may say the same thing with regard to what was said by Mr. Horace Plunkett, who, whatever opinion may be entertained as to the working of his department — a matter on which I do not enter now because it is going to be the subject of an inquiry—has certainly shown a warm and patriotic zeal for the material prosperity of his country.

I pass to another question which was raised by the hon. Member for Kerry and was also touched upon by the hon. Member for North Camberwell—the civil rights of teachers. The hon. Member for North Camberwell read a number of rules which restrict the actions which Irish teachers may take in regard to going to political meetings and taking part in political controversies. It must be remembered that school teachers in Ireland are members of the Civil Service to a greater extent than they can be said to be either in England or Scotland. They are all paid by the State. I do not therefore think they can expect to have quite the same freedom as ordinary private citizens of taking part in politics, because everybody knows that civil servants in England do not take the same part that ordinary private citizens do. But the rules, though unduly stringent, are in point of fact not enforced. Teachers in Ireland enjoy a good deal more practical freedom than might be gathered from the statement made by the hon. Member for East Kerry.

MR. MURPHY indicated dissent.

MR. BRYCE: I do not know the nature of the case referred to by the hon. Member, but, of course, it can easily be understood that for a teacher to be concerned in the local government of the area where he is a teacher might be open to some difficulty. But not knowing the particulars of the case, or how far that principle finds application in it, I cannot say more.

Let me say a word about the Gaelic language. I am entirely in sympathy with the desire to promote the study of the Irish tongue. I think it impossible to suppose that it can ever encroach on the study of English. It is the duty of the education authorities not to infringe on the study of the necessary subjects of elementary instruction, but, subject to that, I believe it to be a good thing for the Irish people that they should take a patriotic interest in their own tongue, which is ennobled by a rich and very interesting literature, with a peculiar imaginative quality of its own, and is associated in their minds with the traditions of their country, which I hope they all desire that they should cherish. I look upon the Gaelic revival with nothing but sympathy, and I hope that such provisions may be made as will give encouragement to the study of Irish in the Irish schools. I do not think that the plan under which the Irish language was taught was satisfactory. I do not think it gave satisfactory results, and I am in communication with the Treasury on the subject of framing a plan which I hope will give due encouragement to the teaching of the language, and be attended with satisfactory results. The Treasury has received in a sympathetic spirit the proposals I have made to them; I hope to be able before long to announce the result of these negotiations.

Some reference has also been made to the grants made by the Intermediate Education Board. It is quite true that these grants had to be cut down, and I sympathised with the hon. Member for North Galway when he said it was a little hard that the only way in which Irishmen could get education was by drinking more. It is particularly hard because the more education you get the less you want to drink. I am told that the study of Irish and the influence of the Gaelic League has been everywhere accompanied by a diminution in intemperance. I think the subject of the grants by the Intermediate Education Board does require to be inquired into. I agree also that the cost of administration in connection with that Board is a great deal too high. It is an extravagant proportion of the total funds at its disposal to spend so large a sum as £20,000 in the actual work of administration and examination.

These are only a few of the many points on which I should have liked to dwell in detail. I think I shall do better to pass to some general considerations. Let me state briefly what seem to be the salient defects in Irish education at present. I am afraid I must say of Irish education, on a survey of it as a whole what Mephistopheles said in Goethe's *Faust* about human nature—*Ich finde es herzlich schlecht* ("I find it heartily bad.") There is no branch of Irish education which can be pronounced to be satisfactory. I begin with the defects of primary education. The Irish schools are much too small, and the payments to the teacher are low partly because the schools are so small. In Ireland there are 9,000 primary schools, and in England, 30,000, but the proportion to the population of Ireland and the population of England is one-seventh. There are more than three-fifths of the primary schools in Ireland where the average attendance is less than fifty. Of course it is impossible that these small schools should pay such good salaries or give such efficient instruction as larger schools. The number of schools in Ireland with only one teacher is inordinately large, and it is in consequence of that that there has been so little promotion and so very little relation between the size of the school and the teacher's pay. A school with an attendance not exceeding fifty pays to the teacher as much as an English teacher receives, but an Irish teacher in a larger school, with greater work, and where there ought to be promotion, is paid very much worse than an English teacher. The report of the Commissioners on National Education of 1904 shows that the smallness of the schools in Ireland is due mainly to two causes which certainly ought to be removed. One is that the population is sparse in the country districts, and the other is the objection on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy to boys and girls being taught together, and the disinclination of the various denominations to use each other's schools. In the north of Ireland most of those small schools owe their origin to the claims of the various Protestant denominations to have schools provided at the cost of the State for each of them. The amalgamation of the schools is desirable so that there may be two teachers in each. I refer particularly to the existence of small Protestant schools maintained by different denominations in the north of Ireland. I understand, but I do not argue at this moment, why Protestant and Catholics desire to have separate schools. We shall hear more than enough of that before long, but with regard to the different Protestant denominations—Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, and so on—what possible reason is there why they should keep up separate schools? It is the sheerest waste of labour and money. I respectfully appeal to hon. Members from the north of Ireland, some Presbyterian and some Episcopalian, to consider whether they cannot induce the members of their respective denominations to get rid of this waste of labour and waste of money.

Now I come to the case of buildings It is one great evil in the Irish schools that the buildings are so inferior, and the matter is more serious than has been mentioned in the House. One result of the insanitary buildings is that when any epidemic disease breaks out all the children in the school take it at once, and these epidemics break out far more frequently than in English and Scotch schools. The consequence is that the work of the school is disorganised, much time is lost, and the educational results obtained in the year are perhaps only half what they should be. That brings me to another branch of the school system—the irregular attendance and the want of compulsion. There is a very partial compulsion in Ireland under the Act of 1892. Under that Act school attendance committees were appointed, but compulsion was very imperfectly applied. Not only is attendance extremely irregular, but the hours are short. I remember that I as a boy, I am sorry to say, went to school at nine o'clock and continued there until two or three. We got at least five hours good hard schooling every day. That was in Scotland. But in some Irish schools the children do not attend until half-past ten or eleven o'clock, and leave at two, the average of school time being two and-half or three hours. [Cries of "No, no."] I do not say it is the case everywhere, but it is so in many instances. Add to this the irregular attendances, and the interruptions from epidemics, and it is quite plain how educational results have been comparatively poor. [AN HON. MEMBER: Long distances.] Yes, no doubt the difficulties are great, and it is a country where, I think, the people do not get up so early as they ought to do. But these are curable defects, and they would be largely remedied if the education was better, the schools more comfortable and attractive, and the teachers had greater encouragement. There is another great defect which militates against the efforts of the best teachers in Ireland. There is a want of local interest and local co-operation which when it exists does very much for schools, and which certainly has been one of the principal causes of the excellent results obtained in Scotland and England. I do not say anything against the managers of the Irish schools. Many of them, I think, have a difficult task. They stand alone in districts in the north and the south in communities where the doctor and the priest are almost the only educated men. The priest in many cases makes the best efforts in his power to bring the children to school. I have had a great deal of testimony as to the effort which the priests make, and as to the support they give to the schoolmasters, but, of course, it is a great drawback not to have an active local public opinion. One of the best things that could be done for the schools of Ireland would be to create something like a body of local managers, or something like local government which would endeavour to give an interest in the school. I am well aware of the enormous difficulty of the task. I am prescribing this as a counsel of perfection. I cannot say that at present I see my way to perfect such a scheme. It has been constantly suggested that the schools ought to be supported out of the local rates, but having regard to the poverty of Ireland it would be very difficult to impose on the local rates a burden equivalent to the school rates in England, and unless you have local contributions you lack one of the most powerful motives for bringing in the people to assist in the work of the schools. I do not despair of some remedy, but I do not think it can be done by any legislation which can be proposed to this Parliament. It must also I think be added that the centralisation of Irish education, the practice of referring everything to the National Board which appoints and pays the teachers, has an unfortunate effect on the system. A highly centralised system of that kind is obliged to become rigid; it cannot have the flexibility of the English and Scottish systems. Therefore I should not only like to see the people associated with the work, but I should wish for less centralisation than we have at the present time.

Now I pass to intermediate education. It fulfils one of the most important functions in the country. It ought to provide for the whole of secondary education. What is the Board of Intermediate Education? It is only an examining body awarding grants to schools and pupils on the results of passes—in other words it holds out prizes which can be obtained by crammers, and which I am afraid are very often obtained by crammers. That is the fault not of the board, but of the legislation which called the system into existence, and the system is utterly wrong. What you want to do is to foster the schools, to encourage the best teachers, and to give them the benefit of enlightened inspection. It is also completely disjoined from technical education, which is under the Agricultural Department. I entirely agree with the hon. Member for East Mayo as to the danger of setting children to work on technical subjects when they are only imperfectly grounded in primary subjects and the earlier part of secondary education. I desire nothing more than to see a complete review of technical instruction as given in Ireland in order to bring it into proper relation to primary and secondary education, and to see that it is not commenced to be given until pupils are properly fitted to receive it.

From this I come to University education, upon which a good deal of our time has been occupied during the discussion. There has been a universal consensus of opinion that the system in Ireland is altogether unsatisfactory. There are not two opinions upon that. The Royal University has been severely condemned, and I would be the last to differ from the general opinion, for in 1880, when the last step was taken to destroy the old Queen's University and to substitute the Royal University, I was almost the only person who opposed the scheme, maintaining that it would necessarily have the results which experience has shown it has had. The most effective condemnation has been given by the Royal University itself, which has recently passed a resolution with unanimity saying that experience had shown that as an examining board it was entirely unsatisfactory and that it ought to be turned into a teaching University.

Many appeals have been made as to what could be done for University education in Ireland. I am sorry to say that I am not in a position to make any statement on that subject, and for two reasons. In the first place, the Government have not yet been long enough in office since the general election to enable them to formulate a policy upon a subject of such confused difficulty; and, in the second place, they feel and everybody feels that this is a case in which there is no use proposing a scheme until they have reasonable prospect of carrying it. The shore is strewn with the wrecks of previous attempts to deal with this question. We all remember the famous attempt of Mr. Gladstone in 1873, the attempt made when the Royal University was created, which is admitted now to be a failure; then there was the attempt made by the Leader of the Opposition seven or eight years ago when he was on the brink of launching a new Irish University scheme, but was obliged to abandon it because he could not obtain sufficient support; and we all remember that three years ago the right hon. Member for Dover was also on the brink of launching a scheme, but recoiled from the difficulties before his path. With these warnings before us, I think the House will see that it would not be prudent for any Government to propose a scheme until they were assured that the scheme had some chance of being accepted and carried. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition in thinking that this is a reform which ought to be effected, I will not say with the general consent of all Parties, for that is too much to expect, but with the support of different elements of public opinion in the country which would enable the Government to carry it through. I assure hon. Gentlemen opposite that this subject is engaging the constant attention of the Government. I do not despair. I hope it may be found possible to reconcile the conflicting views which have caused so long and lamentable a delay. I quite agree in the urgency of the case, and I subscribe to the view of the hon. Member for Cambridge University about the supreme importance of Ireland's having University education. I believe that nothing would do more to pacify men's minds in Ireland, and also to enable Irishmen to work out in the best and wisest way any scheme of self-government that may be entrusted to them. Therefore, I can assure the House that this subject will not be lost sight of for a moment.

Having endeavoured to show what are the chief difficulties of the existing system, I hope I may be permitted to pass now to the reforms that can be introduced. I have been a little disappointed at the absence of practical suggestions. The evils of the existing system have been pointed out, but I have had no suggestions which I can submit to the Irish National Board of Education for carrying out reforms. I will enumerate some which occur to me. One is the consolidation of the small schools. Another is the improvement of school buildings. A third is the association of the people in the locality with the work of the school. A fourth is the improvement of the attendance, and, if possible, an attempt to make the so-called compulsory system more effective. I am not saying that these things are easy. But they ought to be done if they can be done, and some day they will have to be done. Another reform is the union in one system of primary and secondary education. No one can look at Irish Education without feeling that the National Board and the Intermediate Board ought to be consolidated, and technical education ought to be brought into better organic relation with primary and secondary education. At present there does not exist in Ireland the means, which has so long existed in Scotland, of enabling promising children to rise from the primary schools through the secondary schools to the Universities. That is one of the very first things to be done, and I do not see how it can be done while we have the control of primary and secondary education placed under different bodies. We want one education department for Ireland, but how are we to get that? If we were to create an education department for Ireland like the English Education Department and place it under the control of the Irish Government, it would be said that we were bringing another thing into the Castle, and all the prejudice which is supposed to attach to the Castle would immediately attach to the education department. That prejudice is, I think, not altogether deserved, for there are in Dublin Castle a great many able and competent men. But I entirely understand that point of view, and I do not say that I have not some sympathy with it. It may be said, Why not have an elected responsible body? But how can you create an elected responsible body in Ireland for education only? If you go so far as that you will have to go a great deal further. [" Hear, hear," from the IRISH Benches, and cries of "Home Rule."] That at once raises the whole problem. And if I were to suggest what would seem to be one of the most obvious remedies, and bring this Irish education department under the control of the Irish Government, there would be great objections to that. Hon. Members from England and Scotland do not know that the Irish Government has no control over the board of education. All that the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary can do is to disallow certain rules from having immediate effect. And in regard to the Intermediate Education Board we have even less power.

That brings me to the point that the want of money is one of the great difficulties in the way of effecting some of the most necessary reforms. I rather sympathise with the view of Irish Members that it is a pity to draw on the Development Grant except for the purposes of education. It was rather unfortunate that it was drawn upon for other purposes, though these were at the time important and urgent. All I can do is to plead for a liberal treatment of Irish education, for without more money I do not suppose much more can be done than at present. But another difficulty is the great division of opinion that prevails in regard to education and which makes the matter more interlaced with the religious controversy than it is in England. There is hardly a branch of education into which some element of political or religious controversy may not enter. And therefore one asks, when one comes to consider what ought to be done in Ireland, what is the public opinion to which we are to appeal? In England we can appeal to public opinion and get a pretty fair judgment, but in Ireland it is a great deal more difficult to learn, because, owing to the want of local government, owing to the whole history of Ireland, public opinion is not accustomed to express itself with the same fulness and freedom on all these questions apart from politics that it does in England. And yet we can do nothing in Ireland without having public opinion behind us. Then, how are we to effect these reforms? The most obvious thing would be to pass legislation in the Imperial Parliament. I suppose I shall be told by some Members of the House that legislation in the Imperial Parliament upon a purely Irish subject would be received, rightly or wrongly, with a certain measure of suspicion. It will be said, and said with truth, that the Imperial Parliament does not know the facts, and it will be asked how can the Imperial Parliament legislate for Ireland knowing so little about the conditions of Ireland? It may be said, why should not the Imperial Parliament pass such legislation as the Irish Members ask them to pass? Well, but the Imperial Parliament does not want to legislate in the dark, and I do not know that it can be expected to do so. I do not think it is fair to ask English Members to vote blindly upon very important questions, and perhaps be ruled by the opinions of the Irish Members, without knowing about the facts with which they are faced. We would not dream of legislating in this Parliament for India, and yet there are many branches of Irish administration and many facts in Irish society, facts social and moral, about which the average English Member does not know much more than he does about India. Scotland is practically allowed to legislate for herself, and if I were asked why, I should say—study the history of Ireland and Scotland since the succession of the Hanoverian dynasty. I will frankly say that I do not think that Irish opinion is by any means ripe for all the reforms which higher education needs, and I am certain that there are some things which ought to be done for Irish education which Irish opinion would not dictate. Yet I would be very sorry to impose those reforms on Ireland by the superior will and strength of Parliament. I think that the reforms when they come ought to be willingly accepted by the people of Ireland. I need not draw the moral. Those who follow Irish affairs there will find a great many opportunities of applying the morals which I have endeavoured to set before the House.

I do not despair of the position. The first thing needed by any one who proposes to administer Ireland is an abundant stock of optimism, and I would be very sorry to preach counsels of despair. After all, things were a great deal worse in many respects in Ireland fifty or 100 years ago, and I do not see why the progress attained in other directions should not be attained in education also. There are some things that I hope we may begin upon at once. I hope that we may begin to improve the position of teachers and the state of the schools, and also to consider by what means the different education authorities may be consolidated. But there are other things which I can not hold out much hope will be done at once by legislation in this House. But I do not see any reason why with good will and a spirit of compromise on all sides something should not be done to settle the problem of University education. At all events it is always something that we should know what the defects are and what are the difficulties which we have to confront. The great trouble in Ireland has been that she has so long been governed on a sort of hand-to-mouth policy and by temporary expedients. The question of education is certainly for Ireland of supreme importance, whether you begin its reform at the top or the bottom. Ireland has a damp climate unfavourable to arable cultivation. She is very imperfectly supplied with rich mineral deposits which have done so much for the prosperity of England and Scotland; and consequently, owing to the unhappy history of the last three centuries, she has fallen behind her sister countries of England and Scotland. But she has one great asset and that is the intellectual capacity of her people. I believe that there is no people in Europe more fond of learning, more anxious for knowledge, or with a readier intelligence than the Irish. Is it not tragic that so little use has been made of this aptitude? There is an Irish legend that off the coast of Clare lay a happy and beautiful island which once a year was visible above the waste of the Atlantic, but which the people could never approach. That is the symbol of the possibilities that are denied to Ireland by the present waste of her great intellectual capacity. That capacity it should be one of the first objects of statesmanship to develop as far as possible. It is the duty of this country to give the natural gifts of the Irish people, from which she has reaped so much advantage, their fitting training and due opportunity; and any efforts so made or money so spent would be for the common good of Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): We ought to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the very frank and fair statement that he has made to the House. At the same time, those who have listened to the right hon. Gentleman must have come to the conclusion that the debate has not brought much nearer the realisations of those hopes that have been expressed that evening. The right hon. Gentleman has approached the main question with benevolence, but he has not held out any hope of its immediate solution.

MR. BRYCE: I guarded myself against making any statement for the present; but I said nothing about the future.

MR. WALTER LONG: At present there is no answer to be made; and I think that that is a justification of the view taken by the hon. Member for North Camberwell. My right hon. friend the Member for Dover says that the only way is to deal with the University question first, but I submit that we must deal with facts as we find them, and it would be a disaster for Ireland if, owing to the difficulties of dealing with the University question, action in regard to elementary and intermediate education, which are of the greatest possible importance, were to be postponed. It was with view to dealing with some of these difficulties in connection with intermediate education that I had arranged a conference of education authorities so as to prevent overlapping. Has that conference reported?

MR. BRYCE: There was a Report, but I must confess that it did not seem to carry the thing much further; and I am afraid that the system of co-operation will not get rid of the difficulties which arise from the existence of three independent authorities.

MR. WALTER LONG: I think it would be within the discretion of the right hon. Gentleman to present the Report of that Conference to the House. I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman defend Dr. Starkie and Sir Horace Plunkett. I had the honour to work with Dr. Starkie for some months, and I know that Dr. Starkie deserves the highest praise, as having at all times devoted himself to the cause of education with the single object of advancing education in Ireland. He may have taken a wrong course, but whether he was right or wrong his one object has always been the advancement of education in every way, and to that object he has devoted himself with rare industry and ability. As regards Sir Horace Plunkett, the right hon. Gentleman has defended him from a charge which never ought to have been brought against him, Whatever his failings may be, and, like everybody else, he no doubt has failings, nobody who knows him can doubt that he has spent his life in the service of Ireland without regard to personal advancement, advantage or popularity. In that course he has sacrificed the political career to which he might properly have looked forward, and in regard to his patronage, he has always acted in the most honourable and straightforward manner and bestowed it in such a way as to secure the best servants for the State. I think it is a great pity that any reflection should have been made upon one who has served his country so admirably. Something has been said as to what the late Government did with regard to the teaching of Irish in schools, and with regard to Rule 127 (b). I am very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for what he said in regard to both those subjects, because it has been said that the action of the late Government was intended to put an end to the teaching of Irish. That is not the case, and is not an accurate representation of what we did, because Irish can still be taught in the schools in the ordinary way in ordinary school hours. What we did was this. An experiment had been tried under which a small sum was allowed by the Treasury for extra fees which are not paid in England, Scotland or Wales. They were, however, tried as an experiment in Ireland, and they grew to a very large amount. I found when I came to discuss this subject with my advisers what the right hon. Gentleman has said to-night, that while everybody who has any knowledge of Irish education is ready with criticism and condemnations, they are not ready with suggestions for the practical improvement of education. I found that one of the greatest difficulties in connection with Irish education was the number and smallness of schools. The problem I had to face was this: was it better to allow this controversy to go on in connection with the teaching of Irish, or was it not better to come to an arrangement with the Treasury under which the money which they grant for the Irish Development Grant should go to what is of infinitely more value, viz., that in our small mixed schools, where children vary from the age of fourteen to the infant there should be assistant mistresses who would be able to take over and train the small children, who could not unless they had these assistant mistresses possibly be trained at all? The late Irish Government, therefore, took the right course in the best interests of the children, and I believe that the alteration made in the Irish system will prove to be a real blessing to Irish education. As to rule 127(b), the action of the National Board of Education was approved on account of the information the Government were able to obtain that in every country, including America and the Roman Catholic schools in this country, the principle has been adopted. It was in the interest of education and it led to the better general training and education of Irish children. The Irish University question has been discussed with great moderation and a high elevation of tone. There have been suggestions, however that the opposition to the establishment of an Irish university is based on a narrow-minded prejudice and bigotry.

I believe that in the House, in the country, and in Ireland itself, a much wider division of opinion exists on this question than has been revealed by the debate. In fairness it ought to be allowed that those who view the question with doubt, apprehension, or direct opposition, base their views on grounds as just and right as those who advocate the establishment of such a university. It is not a question of bigotry. [" Oh."] Hon. Members below the grangway who say " oh " refuse to recognise the fact that on the Continent in other Roman Catholic countries this step has not been taken. What is the basis of their own demand? It is that Trinity College, Dublin, has, under the control of a Protestant body, become a great Protestant institution, and their own proposal is to establish a university in which the atmosphere shall be of a different kind. No one can rest content with the present condition of things. No one can say that the benefits of university training can for all time be denied to the great body of young Irishmen, but, nevertheless, all must feel that, if a solution is to be found, it can only be by concessions and advances made on both sides. I ask that there should be justice and fair play for those who have opposed this proposal, not because they take a narrow view of the situation, certainly not because they desire to do any injustice to their own Catholic fellow countrymen, but because they believe, upon educational grounds, that it is not a real advance and that any fresh provision ought to be on purely non-sectarian lines, and be governed by academic traditions. I put in this plea on behalf of many in Great Britain and Ireland who earnestly and conscientiously hold these views, who have an honest desire to deal with the question so that justice shall be done to the young men who desire university advantages, but who nevertheless hold strong views based upon real convictions, views which will not be moved by attacks upon them on the ground that they are the product of prejudice, or passion, or narrow-mindedness. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his frank and fair speech, although I rather protest against the sting in the tail of it, in which he talked about pointing the moral to his hon. friends behind him. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to me to take up a *non possumus* attitude and to say to his hon. friends—

> "I leave it to you; read the moral, and act accordingly."

If that is so, I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has taken quite a fair opportunity of preaching that doctrine to the House, because if he believes that Home Rule is the solution of all these difficulties let him have the courage of his opinions and put them to the test. If the right hon. Gentleman has no policy, let him not fall back on the Home Rule suggestion as the remedy to be taken failing the one he can present, and let him realise that, while it is easy to find fault with the present situation, the solution is one of intense difficulty. The Nationalist remedy for the situation is Home Rule. That is a proposal which will be resisted to the last by the Unionist Party; but if any practical scheme is put forward it will meet with neither factious nor unfair opposition.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he rose only to record the fact that to those who occupied the Nationalist benches the debate had been eminently satisfactory. He thought there was no reason to continue it. He thought the debate marked a milestone on the road of Irish progress. He appealed to his hon. friend to withdraw the amendment.

MR. MURPHY said that after the remarks which had been made by his hon. friend he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said he was anxious to raise some questions connected with the administration of the Home Office. He complained that the charge for licences to cab drivers in the Metropolis had been increased by half-a-crown. The number of men engaged in driving licensed vehicles for hire in the Metropolis was 30,000, and a good many of hem were his constituents. The Secretary of State on the 26th of December last year signed a document demanding from cab drivers an increased fee for their licences. At the last election it was said that the increase of the fee was due to the action of his right hon friend the late Home Secretary, but a little examination of the subject showed that the action of his right hon. friend was confined to that of making an inquiry and circulating a proposal for a new by-law. The present Home Secretary on the eve of an election—and he did not hesitate to say that he had a very definite purpose—selected Boxing Day, when he might have been better employed, to increase the charge for licences issued to cab drivers in the Metropolis.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I rise to order, because the statement of the hon. Member is perfectly untrue.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: The statement is perfectly true, because I hold in my hands the document signed by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member knows that I had to sign these orders, which had been drawn up by my predecessor, and which I found in print.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that if it were not open to the right hon. Gentleman to exercise his responsibility as a Minister in this matter, how was it that he issued instructions changing the operation of the Aliens Act?

MR. GLADSTONE: I also had to sign the orders under that Act which I found in print, and after they had been working badly for some months I altered one of them.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the right hon. Gentleman was trying to mix up the Aliens Act with this matter. The present Government had a knack when it suited them of adopting the actions of their predecessors, and refusing to adopt them when it did not suit them. The right hon. Gentleman having signed the document increasing the licence fee allowed the Secretary to the Board of Education to write a letter in which he said that the late Home Secretary was responsible for the Order, and not the present Home Secretary, who signed it. Then there was the question of the Aliens Act. They had no explanation of why the limit in regard to the carrying of immigrants on ships had been raised from twelve to twenty, and it looked as if that action had been taken in order that the Home Secretary might defeat the statute and burden the poor in the East End of London with the keep of human beings who had been refused by every other civilised nation.

Whereupon Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put accordingly, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do Report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Committee read, and discharged. Bill committed to the Select Committee on the Education (Provision of Meals) Bill.—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald.*)

POST OFFICE (UNITED KINGDOM).

Return ordered, "of the Post Offices, Sub-Post Offices, Telegraph Offices, and Public Telephone Call Offices, which are situated on licensed premises in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales respectively."—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*)

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House,

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley) drew attention to a case which he said had arisen that day under the Aliens Act. A Russian Jew possessing only £2 10s. had been rejected at Gravesend by the officer. On reaching St. Katharine's Dock, the immigrant told his informant that he was a deserter from the Russian Army. Shortly afterwards, by some means or other, he contrived to escape, and at the time he received this information the man was at large, the police being in search of him. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make prompt inquiries into the case and cover this unfortunate man with all the protection that could be afforded him. The House would remember that three or four weeks ago an alien immigrant proved to be a deserter from the Russian Army, and it then turned out that he was afraid to tell the truth, as he thought it would mean at once his return to Russia and probably certain death. This man, probably a comrade of the former one, followed the same tactics, with the result that he met the very serious fate of being rejected. He thought it was necessary to bring this matter before the House of Commons at the earliest possible moment, as it seemed a most serious thing to happen under British law. Russia was in a state of revolution, and while he candidly admitted that a large proportion of the refugees from Russia were Socialists with whom he was not in agreement, that made him the more anxious that those who came here for asylum in consequence of religious or political persecution should not be turned back. If there was one thing we prided ourselves upon, it was that this country had been the asylum of the victims of religious or political tyranny.

MR. GLADSTONE said he had no knowledge of the facts of the case, but he would at once make inquiries. If the man did not avail himself of his right of appeal, but escaped, he exposed himself to the penalties of the Act. He would make inquiries and communicate with the hon. Gentleman.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) thought that the House was placed in a serious position in regard to this man, whom apparently the police were hunting with a view of punishing him. If they caught him he would be brought before a court of summary jurisdiction, convicted as a rogue and vagabond and committed to prison. They were in this position, that a man who stated he was a deserter from the Russian army would be punished in our courts for having escaped from custody because he expected to be sent back to Russia. He thought it should be recognised that every deserter from the Russian army was a political refugee and should be so treated.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 23rd March, 1906.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Ponsonby (E. Bessborough) sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H L.] Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.] Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Annual Report of proceedings under the Tithe Acts, 1836 to 1891, the Copyhold Act, 1894, the Inclosure Acts, 1845 to 1899, the Agricultural Holdings Acts, 1883 to 1900, the Drainage and Improvement of Land Acts, the Universities and College Estates Acts, 1858 to 1898, the Glebe Lands Act, 1888, and certain other Acts, for the year 1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE STRANDING OF THE "ORDOVICIAN.'

*LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether, at the recent formal investigation into the stranding of the steamer "Ordovician," the Court declared that at the time of the occurrence a Greek who could speak no English was at the wheel and a Greek who could speak no English was on the look-out, and that bad steering conduced to the disaster; and, if so, whether in view of the circumstances they will quash the suspension of the certificate of the chief officer of the "Ordovician." I hold in my hand the official Report of the formal investigation held at Cardiff into the circumstances attending the stranding and loss of this steamship. The Report of the Court was as follows—

> "The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances attending the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds, for the reasons stated in the Annex hereto, that the stranding and loss of the vessel were caused by bad steering by the foreign seamen and the negligent supervision of the officer of the watch. The Court finds the chief officer, Mr. William John Jones, in default, and suspends his certificate for three months."

With your Lordships' permission I will read one or two extracts from the Annex which will show, I think, in a startling manner the way matters are now carried on on board some of our British merchant ships. It is stated in the Annex that in this vessel there was only one certificated deck officer besides the master, who, therefore, had to take necessary rest when the first mate, who held a master's certificate, was in charge. Your Lordships will therefore see that there was only one officer in addition to the captain in this fairly large vessel. In setting forth what the cause of the stranding was, the Court states—

> "The stranding and loss of the vessel were caused by the bad steering of the two Greek sailors who were at the wheel during the one and a half hours preceding the stranding, and by the negligent supervision by the officer of the watch."

Further on in the Annex it is stated that—

> "The Court is therefore of opinion that the vessel was not navigated with proper and seamanlike care, and that her loss was due, not to any wrongful act or default of the master, but to the bad steering of the Greek A.B.s and the negligent supervision of the chief officer, who is found in default, and his certificate is suspended for three months. It is not within the province of this Court to express an opinion as to the policy, expedience, or necessity of employing foreign seamen on British vessels, nor to institute any comparison between British and foreign seamen. But the Court deems it a duty to direct attention to the fact that this is the third wreck inquiry held here within a month in which the deck hands have been chiefly foreign seamen with no knowledge of the English language.

The Court points out that in the recent "Rowtor" inquiry it was proved that a Spaniard who could neither speak nor understand English was at the wheel when the vessel stranded; and that in the inquiry into the loss of the "Bavaria"—which involved the sacrifice of many lives—the only deck hands that gave evidence were Russians who were entirely ignorant of the English language, and the Court was satisfied that they made a false imputation on the reputation of the master, who had lost his life in trying to save his vessel. And the Court concludes—

> "The only inference within the province of this Court to draw from the above facts is that special and unremitting vigilance and supervision must be exercised by officers when seamen unable to understand or speak English are at the wheel or on the look-out."

If that were carried out it would mean that each vessel carrying seamen who were ignorant of the English language should ship extra officers. It is absolutely impossible to expect one man to do two men's work, or to be in two places at the same time. How is it conceivable that an officer on the look-out could leave the front of the bridge and go back to the man at the wheel and constantly supervise what he is doing? I would point out to your Lordships that the suspension of the certificate of an officer is a much more serious thing than appears at first sight, because, when an officer whose certificate has been suspended goes to seek employment, he is refused another berth. So far as I understand, the unfortunate officer who is punished in this manner has no Court of Appeal, that is to say, there is no Court of experts to whom he can appeal to go over the evidence and judge whether the decision of the formal Court of Inquiry was correct or not. What was the evidence given in this case? Who were the witnesses? The two Greeks were the only witnesses, for they were the only men on deck besides the officer, and they did not understand one word of English. I have very carefully read the Report of the formal investigation into the loss of this ship, and before coming to your Lordships' House I submitted it to a very eminent naval officer, and asked his opinion upon it; and his view was that, judging by the facts set out in the Report, there was no justification for suspending the certificate of the officer in question.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, I must offer my noble friend my sincere congratulations on the able manner in which he has attempted to make a good case out of very indifferent material. If any of your Lordships have read the Report of the proceedings at the Court of Inquiry on the loss of the "Ordovician," I think you will have been struck by the leniency of that Court towards the officer in question. What happened, roughly, was this. The master of the ship went down below at 1.10 o'clock on the morning of the 6th January, having given distinct orders to the officer he left on deck to call him in the event of the ship running into bad weather or into a fog. At 2.15 o'clock of the same morning the vessel ran into a thick fog, and at 2.35 she struck the rocks and was lost. The chief officer took no steps whatever to carry out the orders of the captain. He also failed to notice that the ship had deviated considerably from her course, although this must have been very obvious from the bearings of the lights. The vessel deviated, I think, five miles to the east of her course in an hour and a half. With regard to the finding of the Court, the Court did not find that the seamen's ignorance of the English language had anything to do with the casualty. The loss of the vessel was attributed, not only to bad steering, but also to the negligent supervision of the chief officer. In these circumstances it is quite impossible for the Board of Trade to reverse the decision they have already come to. The Question has been twice put in the House of Commons, and the President of the Board of Trade has on both occasions replied in the negative. I do not think there is anything more to be said on the subject.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 23*rd March*, 1906.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; Lancashire Electric Power Bill; North and South Shields Electric Railway Bill; North East London Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—South Metropolitan Electric Light and Power Bill; London United Tramsways Bill

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Thornton Urban District Gas Bill, Watford Gas Bill, Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

COLTON, WILLIAM GEORGE.

Petition of William George Colton, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896). AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Bristol, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUATION SCOTLAND ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING BILL).

Petitions in favour; from Cromarty; Dawley; Exeter; Liverpool; Manchester; Northwich; Shipley; Skermersdale; Sligo; Stokesley; and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION, ETC. (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law; From Askworth; Avon Dassett (two); Bath; Beswick (two); Blackley; Blendworth (two); Blyth; Bolton (two); Bolton le Sands (three); Boyton; Bradford; Brooks's Bar; Bucklesham (two); Buglawton; Burnley; Cardington; Cartmel Fell; Castle Combe (two); Castle Eaton (two); Codicote (two); Congham; Worley; Dartington; Dorney; East Lydford (two); Gidleigh; Gilling East; Great Marlow; Greenside (two); Halwell; Hambledon; Haslingden; Heddington; Helhoughton; Ipsden; Lotton; Lilley; Little Somerford; Maltby le Marsh; Manchester; Mapledurham (two); Matching; Mere; Middleton; Morville; Morville with Aston Eyres; Mossley; Muston; Nettlebed; Newton Hall; Oldham (four); Poole Keynes; Preston Capes; Prestwich; Sheepy Magna (two); Shepnall; Sherfield; Staunton (two); Spittal (two); Stanhoe; Stinchcombe; Sudeley Manor (two); Sutton Montis; Torksey; Wansford (two); West Lilburn; Weston (two); West Raynham; Whitfield; Willey cum Barrow (two); and, Yealand (two); to lie upon the Table.

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Paper [presented 20th March] to be printed. [No. 91.]

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Copy presented, of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Tithe Acts, Copyhold Act, 1894, Inclosure Acts, and other Acts for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1859 AND 1876.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th March, 1906, declaring Changsha to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of The Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

New Battleship at Devonport—Proportion of Dockyard and Contract Works.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state approximately what percentage of the work associated with the building of the proposed battleship in the Royal dockyard at Devonport will be put out to contract; and whether he will issue instructions that, provided the same quality and cheapness of construction can be assured, such parts as stanchions, eye-plates, water-tight doors, block bands, and other fittings shall be produced in the workshops of the Royal dockyards.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is estimated that the expenditure on dockyard labour in connection with the building of the proposed new battleship at Devonport will be about 15 per cent. of the total cost. The remaining 85 per cent. represents expenditure on contract work, and includes, not only materials, but guns, gun mountings, armour, propelling machinery, boilers, and auxiliary machinery. As regards the latter part of the Question, the dockyards are not essentially manufacturing establishments, and it is not considered that it will be in the interests of the public service to make any organic change in the practice usually followed in battleship construction. Where, however, it may be expedient, for economic or other reasons, dockyard manufacture is resorted to in preference to obtaining articles by contract.

No Discharges at Devonport Dockyard.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how far Devonport will be affected by the new list of discharges still regarded as necessary in consequence of the new Naval policy; and whether, in view of what Devonport has already suffered in this regard, he will favourably consider its claim to be exempt from a further diminution of its dockyard population.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is not intended to make any further discharges at Devonport during the coming financial year. This does not, of course, apply to temporary entries.

Avocations of William Ellis, of Toomebridge.

MR. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that William Ellis, senior, Toomebridge, holds the positions of postmaster and petty sessions clerk for that district; is agent for the Toome and Vulrea eel fishery; is sub-agent for Mrs. Jones's Moneyglass estate, and has been land agent for Lady Spencer's Castledawson estate for the past four years; and whether he will consider the advisability of preventing a public official from holding such a variety of positions, the duties of which must occasionally conflict with one another.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The registrar of petty sessions clerks informs me that Mr. Ellis, the petty sessions clerk at Toomebridge, is also the sub-postmaster of that place, is one of the lessees of the Toomebridge eel fishery, and is sub-agent and agent respectively for the two estates mentioned. The clerk is not precluded, either by Statute or by Order of the Lord-Lieutenant, from holding any of these positions.

Mr. Ellis performs his duties as petty sessions clerk to the satisfaction of the registrar, and no complaints against him have been received. The petty sessions at Toomebridge are held but once a month, and the clerk's salary is proportionate to the limited extent of the duties to be performed.

Hours of Labourers at the Royal Naval Hospital.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the labourers in the Royal Naval Hospital work more hours than the labourers in the Royal dockyards; and whether he will consider the advisability of making the working day and advantages which obtain in the dockyard the rule for the Naval Hospital.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The matter is under consideration.

Report of Committee on Naval Domestics.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the Seceretary to the Admiralty when he will be able to furnish the House with the Report of the Admiralty Committee, appointed in January 1905, to consider the question of the status and emoluments of the naval domestics.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Committee referred to was a departmental committee, and the Report is now under consideration. It is not proposed to publish it.

Abandonment of the Construction of an Armoured Cruiser.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty on what grounds it has been decided to abandon the construction of one of the four armoured cruisers provided for in the Navy Estimates of 1905-6, and authorised by Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The fourth armoured cruiser in 1905-6 was not proceeded with, as a careful scrutiny of the progress of warship building in other countries, and the existing strength of foreign navies, proved it to be unnecessary to proceed with this vessel when the time arrived, late in the year, for giving the orders for the new ships to be laid down.

Lymph used at National Vaccine Establishment.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether in any instance lymph has been used at the national vaccine establishment which has been derived from the artificial inoculation of calves with smallpox and its subsequent cultivation on a series of calves.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The usual method of obtaining lymph for use at the national vaccine establishment is by vaccinating calves with vaccine lymph obtained from children. Occasionally, however, the lmyph has been procured from abroad, and it is possible that in some instance of this kind the lymph may have been originally derived from artificial inoculation of calves with smallpox, but in no case is lymph used at the establishment unless it has been passed through a series of calves.

Sheep Dipping in Lanarkshire.

MR. MENZIES (Lanarkshire, S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will consent to alter the date of the second sheep-dipping in the upper, or southern, ward of Lanarkshire from 1st August to 1st July, as arranged for in Section 15, Sub-section 2, of The Sheep Dipping (Scotland) Order, 1905.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have received representations on this subject, which are now under consideration. I hope it may be found practicable to meet special cases in which, owing to the local practice as regards dipping, the Order as it stands would entail the re-dipping of sheep already dipped under proper safeguards in July.

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading, read.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs) said that in moving the Second Reading of the Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill he craved the indulgence and forbearance of the House. The title of the Bill had been considerably altered from that which had been originally presented to the House. That arose in this way. He had intended to include counties within the scope of the Bill, and also to empower local authorities to acquire compulsorily land at a fair value for public purposes. But, after consideration, it was thought that the embodiment of such clauses would over-burden the Bill, while it was also stated that some of them might be incompetent; therefore he had limited this Bill to what was known as the Glasgow Bill. By doing so they could get a straight issue on which to debate the principle of the taxation of land values. The principle of the Bill had been supported by no fewer than 550 municipalities, by the Prime Minister in his recent speech in the Albert Hall, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by the Lord-Advocate for Scotland. Here he might be allowed to say that, as a Scotsman, he tendered his sincere congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman on his appointment to the distinguished position of Lord-Advocate, and on his making his first appearance in a Scottish debate; and he expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would have a brilliant career in his new office. This House had affirmed the principle of this measure in the last Parliament by a majority of twenty. Without wishing to be offensive he might be permitted to say that in this reformed House of Commons there would be a much greater majority in favour of the Bill than on the last occasion on which it was presented to the House. Roughly speaking, the Bill provided for the separate valuation of sites and for the imposition of a rate not exceeding 2s. per £1 on site values. Clause 7 provided for the taxation of feu duties by the method of granting a right of relief to the person liable in payment of the feu duty against the person entitled to receive payment. That seemed to him to form the main scope of the Bill. He did not presume to think in asking the House to assent to the Second Reading of this Bill that every hon. Member would agree with every detail in it, but he hoped that they would agree with its main principle—which was the taxation of land values. It met the needs of municipalities—needs not created by extravagance, but imposed upon them by the growing necessities of the case; by the rise in the standard of comfort and civilisation which had increased, was increasing, and was likely to increase—by discovering new sources of revenue. To many municipal corporations it appeared that no more fitting subject of taxation could be found than the property which derived so much of its value from municipal expenditure. They knew that in the past expenditure had generally proceeded along the line of land tenure. Not to go too far back, they were aware that a tax of 4s. in the £ was imposed on the land in order to maintain the functions of government. However, it had come to pass that the landowner had slipped out of his obligation, and had transferred that burden to the shoulders of others. He maintained that there was a fundamental distinction between the site of a house and the structure. The house depreciated in value unless expenditure was incurred in keeping it in a state of repair; but the site remained, and it appreciated in value by the presence and the expenditure of the community. When rents increased it was not because the value of the building had increased, but because the value of the site had increased. It was locality, therefore, which gave the site its value. If a man had his house burned down it took him no more to rebuild it than it did to build the original house. Now he held that one of the effects of this Bill, if put into operation, would be to kill land speculation. In New South Wales, by the imposition of a two-shilling tax on the annual rent of land values, land speculation had been killed. At the present moment vacant land in this country contributed practically little or nothing in taxation to the community. Take the case of a man who bought two pieces of land each of the same value. On the one buildings were erected, and the other he left vacant. On the first he paid taxes, on the second he paid nothing; but the value of the second was continually being increased by the expenditure of his neighbours and of the municipal corporation. That was a tax on industry. The more a man did to make his house valuable, the more he had to pay for his energy and enterprise in upholding the machinery of municipal government; while the man who held up his land got off scot-free. And then, when the owner of the vacant land let it out in feu, he took the law into his own hand and contracted himself out of all liability by saying that the feuar should pay all the taxation on the property. A great deal had been said about the unearned increment. It was not right to say that it was unearned; it was unearned as far as the landlord was concerned, but not as far as the community was concerned. Some who were in favour of the principle of this Bill thought that the whole amount of what was called the unearned increment ought to go to the benefit of the local rates, that was to say that the whole unearned increment should be appropriated by the community. That was not the case with the present Bill. The Bill merely proposed that a rate not exceeding two shillings in the pound should be levied in addition to the ordinary rates on the holder of the land. Take a case in point. When the municipality of Portobello proposed to expend a certain amount of money in public improvement, rents in the neighbourhood were increased by £5,000. It seemed to him and those who agreed with him, that the consumer of land values, who in the case mentioned was the owner of the land, ought to pay his fair share of taxation. The hon. Member for Holborn had given notice of an Amendment to the Second Reading of the Bill setting forth that a satisfactory reform of the present system of local taxation must be arrived at, not by piecemeal and partial treatment, but by such legislation as would secure fair and equitable results to all classes of the community. The position taken up by the hon. Member for Holborn reminded him of the remark of the late President Lincoln, that he generally found that the man who protested that he would shed the last drop of his blood in defence of his country was amazingly particular about the first drop. It had been pointed out that there was an inequitable distribution of taxation on personal and heritable property. That question did not come within the scope of the measure now under consideration; but he had no doubt that if the hon. Gentleman who brought that matter before the House of Commons last year introduced a Bill on the subject, those on the Ministerial side of the House would be found willing to support it. It was pointed out that there were other things besides land which got the benefit of the expenditure of the community, such as gas-works, water-works, and tramways. In the first place most of those were already municipalised, and rightly so. They occupied a totally different position from the land. Where those enterprises were not municipalised, so soon as exorbitant charges were imposed so soon was there competition. That could not be the case in regard to land. It had been argued by an hon. Member that it might be for the ultimate good of the community if a vacant site was kept back from occupation for twenty or thirty years—that the community would then reap an immense benefit. It was easy to reduce that argument to an absurdity and say that it would be still better if the land was kept back from occupation for 200 or 300 years. Again, it had been argued that to put a tax on unoccupied land would not cheapen sites for workmen's houses. But, he insisted, experience went quite contrary to that argument; it had been proved that by putting a tax on unoccupied land a great deal of it must necessarily come into the market by easy and natural stages. If that was not the case, it was useless on the part of hon. Gentleman opposite to oppose this measure. Another question dealt with by the Bill was the very important one of the taxation of feu duties. He held very emphatically that feu duties acquired their value from the presence of the community, and so ought in justice to contribute to the burdens of the community. They depended for their existence on the continuance of the community, and without the community the ground would not be worth the feu duty. The ground was not the security for the feu duty; it required also the house that might be built upon it to make it of value. The feu duty was not the interest on a mortgage with the land as security any more than rent was the interest on a bond with the house as security. In the case of interest on mortgages the subject of the mortgage might be redeemed. It was not so in the case of a feu duty or house property. By stress of circumstances there might be a chance of purchasing the feu duty, but there was no inherent right to do so. Feu duty was undoubtedly rent, and as such ought to bear its fair share of the burdens which other rents had to bear.

It was argued that the clause should not have a retrospective effect. There might be a legitimate difference of opinion with regard to that, but it was a matter, he should say, for discussion in Committee. All he asked the House now to do was to assent to the principle of the Bill. Coming to the question of contract between the landlord and feuar, he would ask whether the parties to the contract were free agents. All monopolies were bad, but surely there was no kind of monopoly worse than land monopoly. Did the landlord and feuar meet on equal terms? If they did, then let them assume that the feu duty was rent. In that case the feuar was asked in many cases to pay from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. more than the usual rent. They knew the fate of those who went into courts of law to try and get interest at that rate. How was it that when a contract was entered into, the proprietor always managed to contract himself out of all obligations with reference to local rates, and that the whole burden had to be borne by the feuar? Surely no one would tell him that there was freedom of contract there. It was stated that there would be a violent interference with existing contracts by making the clause have a retrospective effect. He would, however, point to the crofters' legislation, and to the whole trend of Irish legislation on the land question, which had been so amply justified by experience. Surely the words of the Prime Minister, speaking in 1903 in the House, meant that in his opinion existing contracts were not altogether so safe and sacrosanct as was represented. He had heard one or two gentlemen deride the idea that there was no freedom of contract between the superior and the feuar. At the present moment the north-east of Scotland was greatly excited, because one of its public boards wanted a bit of land on which to build a school, and the condition laid down was that unless the building was reserved for all time for that purpose, no matter what legislation might ensue, the land would not be granted. Yet they talked of freedom of contract. Everyone knew that towns were not allowed to extend in the direction wanted, because of the difficulty of acquiring land on reasonable terms. One of the land associations of the north of Scotland was protesting against the passing of the measure. A few years ago the Corporation of Aberdeen erected a bridge across the Dee, where that association had 180 acres of land. The corporation erected a bridge giving access to that particular ground, and enabling it to be feued by the land association. The bridge cost somewhere about £25,000, the land associations contributed merely £3,000 or £4,000; and yet, when the Harbour Commissioners of Aberdeen wanted to purchase 8½ acres of the land, which had been made so valuable by the erection of the bridge, they were charged no less than £56,000, although the annual rental on the valuation roll was only £444. The same commissioners had to get 4¾ acres of ground adjacent, belonging to another landlord, and they were mulcted in a sum of £29,900, although the rental on the valuation roll was only £32 10s. 0d. If they did not go in for the principle of the taxation of land values, he put it to the House whether they should not have something like municipal death duties. Those men who reaped so much out of the energy and expenditure of the community should be made to return a fair proportion to the community. He understood that his hon. friend the Member for Preston was to propose an Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill. The name of his hon. friend was associated in the public mind with the powerful advocacy of Cobdenite principles. What was it that Cobden said with regard to the land laws? He said—

> "I warn Ministers, I warn landowners and the aristocracy of this country against forcing upon the attention of the middle and industrious classes the subject of taxation. For great as I consider the grievance of the protective system, mighty as I consider the fraud and injustice of the Corn Laws, I verily believe that if you were to bring forward the history of taxation in this country for the last one hundred and fifty years you would find as black a record against the landowners as even the Corn Law itself."

He did not say that this Bill would redress all the grievances which Mr. Cobden had in his mind, but he believed it was a step in that direction. He believed the Bill would have a marked effect upon that class of men who did so much against the best interests of the country, that class known as the slum landlords. The people of Ireland had been working out their own solution of their land question; they in Scotland might not have their wit, eloquence, and imagination, but they were as fully alive to the evils of their land system and were as fully determined that they should be grappled with. It would not do that on this question the minimum of performance should follow the maximum of promise. He appealed to the House to assent to the principle of the Bill by giving it its Second Reading and so to do some measure of justice to the populations of their great towns. He was certain that the Government would be no party to disregarding the authoritative voice of the 550 municipalities which advocated the passing of the measure. He begged to move.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.) said he had two reasons for seconding the Motion. The first was that his predecessor in the representation of East Renfrew moved the Second Reading last session, and the second was that his constituents were very deeply interested in the matter because it closely touched their relations in and with the city of Glasgow. In the debate which took place last session the Corporation of Glasgow was twitted with not being able to find a representative of its own to plead its cause in this House. True at that time Glasgow was misrepresented and not represented; its then representatives were largely concerned in the landed interest; to-day they represented the people. Last year the Bill was opposed by hon. Members to whom the *status quo* was everything; those Gentlemen were no longer Members of the House, and not a single Scottish representative who took an active part in opposing last year's Bill had secured re-election to Parliament. He did not intend to discuss the details of this intricate question. Others who would follow—life long students of the subject—were much more able to do so than he; but he yielded to none in his profound conviction as to the need for such a measure as the Bill under discussion. He was strongly fortified in that conviction by the fact that the Town Council of Glasgow, one of the best governed cities in the Empire, was almost to a man in favour of it, and that there were no less than 550 municipalities in Great Britain and Ireland supporting the Bill. Further, at least sixty of the seventy-two hon. Members who now represented Scotland were in favour of it. The people of Scotland (except the happy possessors of the land) were for it. A Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes in 1885, reported in favour of a measure of this kind, and lastly a Tory Government last session allowed this very Bill to pass its Second Reading. He approached this question from a tenants' standpoint, and as one who held that all men had equal rights in the land. What was this measure designed to effect? Broadly, it was to prevent the squeezing of the poor man by the land monopolist. He supported the Bill for two reasons—firstly, because it would give labour and industry a more just share of their own earnings, and secondly, it would bring idle land into the market, especially in the belt on which all our great cities must expand. Most hon. Members had heard of the Old Scotch Pumps. These pumps were placed for the refreshment of weary travellers, who, however, were put to very great exertions in the effort to obtain a refreshing drink. The expenditure of a great deal of labour produced very small results, so far as the traveller himself was concerned, and the secret was that the pumps were so arranged that for every drop of water he drew for himself, a gallon went up to the big house on the hill. This aptly illustrated the position of most of their great industries as well as the position of every labouring man who rented a cottage or a tenement throughout Scotland. Their present system of putting all the burdens on the buildings bore hard on all classes, and hardest of all on the poorest, for the man with the smallest income paid most relatively for rent and rates. It pressed on labour, skilled and unskilled. It pressed on industry, trade, and commerce, and even science and art did not escape the pressure. The rent of the meanest cottage and the rent of the workshop were at once advanced, and the workman was hit twice—aye, hit three times. The landlord took more rent, the collector demanded more rates, and the employer gave smaller wages, because, his rent and rates being higher, he could not pay more. The shop, the warehouse, the merchant's office, the professional man's rent all went up because the owner of the land on which they lived and worked took advantage of their natural wish—their necessity in many cases—to remain where they were, and where they had, by years of toil, created for themselves comfortable homes and good surroundings, when they had provided themselves at great expense with good sanitation, a pure water supply, well lit streets, and much else that went to make life, even in great cities, worth living. No sooner had this been done than a gentleman of unlimited leisure swooped down and demanded in the shape of increased ground rent nine-tenths of the fruits of all their efforts. It was said that seventy men owned one half of Scotland. Half-a-dozen of them held most of the golden zone which surrounded the city of Glasgow. They were good men in their ways. He did not blame them for taking the best price they could get for their land or for holding it back when they saw a prospect of doing better five or ten years hence. He did the same himself when he had anything of value to sell. They did not blame the men; they blamed the system and they wanted to alter it. Land fetching £2 per acre for the grazing of cattle fetched £40 to £200 when wanted for the shelter of men, and anything up to £500,000 when the buyer was cornered. The present Lord Advocate, in supporting this Bill last session, quoted instances in Scotland where eighty-six, 136, and 435 years' purchase had had to be paid to private individuals for land in Scotland when wanted for public purposes. A Bill like this in force would create such competition amongst sellers as would save the State from having to pay such exorbitant rates. He would like to quote one or two concrete cases from Glasgow. When the Cathcart School Board wanted the use of land to erect a public school, the price rose from £2 10s. per acre per annum to £100 per acre per annum. The Glasgow Social Union, who resolved to build houses for the working classes, had to pay for the ground they occupied at the rate of £4,440 per acre or over £200 per acre per annum, while the Corporation paid £43,500 for 43½ acres between the River Clyde and Rutherglen Road, as an addition to the Glasgow Green—£1,000 per acre. £43,500 for permission to convert a swamp into a recreation ground! The Corporation, over a hundred years ago, sold the site upon which the Glasgow municipal buildings stand for 2s. 8d. per square yard, or some £800 in all. When the Corporation bought this same site back, some twenty years ago, they had to pay £175,000—equal to £35 16s. per square yard. There were other instances he might cite, but surely these were sufficient. What was proposed by this Bill was not an untried experiment. In New Zealand no fewer than sixty rating districts had adopted the taxation of land values for local purposes, with the most beneficent results, and he could quote the testimony of competent authorities on that point. In New South Wales, in Queensland, in South Australia, in New York, in Canada, and in Japan steps were being or had been taken in the same direction. He would briefly refer to some of the objections that had been urged against the Bill. The House was told last session that the landowners before they were able to feu were obliged to lay out large sums of money in the preparation of plans for houses, in roadways, on drainage, and in other ways. He had made careful inquiries and he found that this was very far from being the case anywhere in Scotland. There might be occasional instances where that was done, but it was only in cases where the landlord found that he had a prospect of getting back a pound for the shilling he laid out. The second argument constantly urged was the widows' and orphans' argument. They were told it would be very hard on those who had invested their small savings in ground rents. But a measure of this kind would benefit a hundred widows for every one it would injure, because they would be as eager as anyone else to have their rates reduced. With regard to trust funds invested the persons interested would suffer no greater injury than holders of Consols suffered when Mr. Goschen reduced the interest from 3 to 2½ per cent. He would not attempt to answer all the arguments constantly urged against this measure, because that could be better done by those who would follow him. It was sometimes said that if a new source of revenue was put within the reach of a municipality it would greatly encourage them in extravagance. It would encourage them in useful enterprises, in the cheapening of trams to the country, the pulling down of old slums and the making of open air spaces, and should they be tempted to use this source of income for wasteful purposes, a chord of public opinion would be struck which would not fail to be vocal. It was not intended to increase the revenue. What was put upon the land would be taken off improvements. In 1850 the gross rental of Glasgow was £1,017,362. In 1890 it was £4,952,960, an increase of £78,000 per annum, or 386 per cent. in fifty years. What the promoters of this Bill desired, what they were aiming at, was to make it possible for a workman to have a better house for £8 a year than he was now able to get for £16. They wanted him to have it where his wife and children could have fresh air and decent surroundings, instead of in the slums, where the owners of the land would not keep their horses or dogs. Intemperance was said to be the chief cause of this condition of affairs. It was no doubt one of the causes, but the cruel wrong arising from the fact that our people were shut out from the land fell alike upon the just and the unjust. We had now cheap transit in the large cities, and if land could be obtained at a moderate price the condition of affairs would be speedily altered. Men were holding the land with an iron grip, and it must be the object of Parliament to slacken that grip. They wanted to make it as unprofitable to keep idle land as it was to keep an idle horse. He did not object to a man having two or three millions a year—what would some of our charities do without them?—nor did he mind men having large incomes so long as they were honestly earned by the exercise of superior strength or skill, but he did object to accumulations of great wealth at one end of the scale which entailed accumulations of misery and wretchedness at the other. If we had unemployed at the top we must have unemployed at the bottom. If there were fewer millionaires we would be troubled with fewer subscription lists. He appealed to the House not to reject this measure. It was, he thought, needless to make any appeal to the Prime Minister, who had both inside and outside the House expressed himself strongly in favour of the principle of this Bill. No doubt the Bill would also have the effective support of the Lord Advocate. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because if this Bill appealed to any one it should be the Chancellor of the Exchequer. All they asked was that he would show his gratitude to them for unearthing a new source of revenue—a new gold mine. They only desired to take the crust for local purposes. The deep hidden deposits they left him to extract at his leisure and they would ask no questions. The Bill secured the valuation of land apart from improvements, and it would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to estimate how much could be secured for the national purse at any given rate from this source. Might they suggest this as a first step in the readjustment of taxation which was so emphatically demanded by the country at the recent general election. He need not appeal to hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House, as he believed that nine-tenths of them were pledged to the principle embodied in this Bill, and he might say the same of the hon. Members who sat on the front Benches below the gangway on the opposite side. Were it necessary to make an appeal to their Irish friends for support, he would do so on the plea that in a domestic matter of this kind Scotland should have her own way. He hoped that the time was not far distant when it would not be necessary for Scotland to trouble the Imperial Parliament with the results that follow the working of their own pump handles, and when they would be allowed to manage all purely domestic matters in their own way for themselves. He was sure that he would not appeal to their friends in vain when he reminded them that this Bill related to Scotland alone, and that at least sixty of the seventy-two Scottish Members of this House ardently desired the passing of this measure. With all deference he made an appeal to the Party opposite, the Party that was supposed to represent the landed interests in this House, but who never failed—when gently driven—to consider the poor. He had great hopes that the majority even on that side would support this measure. If any small remnant remained to whom further appeal was needed, he would remind them of their own often repeated prayer—"laying aside all personal interests and prejudices," let him appeal to them to answer their own prayers. In conclusion he would say that in the first half of the last century two barbed wire fences stood between our people and a condition of comfort and happiness. Richard Cobden smashed the fence which surrounded our shores. The clumsy attempt which had been made to re-erect that fence had brought together a force which would demolish the other, and enable us to take another great step in advance, by giving the people free access to the land, and bringing happiness and content to the people of this country.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time.—(*Mr. Sutherland.*)

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he rose to move the rejection of this Bill, and he felt sure that his intervention would not be resented. It was true that this Bill applied to Scotland only, but he thought everyone who was in favour of the Bill looked upon it, not merely as a measure for Scotland, but as a measure which they hoped to extend to the whole of the United Kingdom. Therefore, Englishmen were justified in sallying forth to resist the attack. He believed that the Bill was based upon a fundamental delusion. He recognised fully the sincerity of those who supported it and were convinced of its value, but he believed they had been led away by delusive arguments into supporting what was not a reform but an obstacle to reform. At the back of the Bill was really the name of Henry George. He was the author of the whole delusion. About twenty-five years ago he startled the country by professing to teach a new gospel, which was really only a *réchauffé* of the doctrine of the French physiocrats of the eighteenth century that nothing was to be taxed except land. The object Henry George had in view was to get rid of private property in land. That was also the object of the originators of this Bill. Members had all received a circular issued by a gentleman who had led this agitation in Scotland. There were many mistakes of fact in that circular. The author said that a land tax was imposed by William the Third, and out of that land tax landowners had ever since been trying to escape. If he had read history more carefully he would have known that this tax was not a land tax but an income tax, and with further investigation he would have discovered that it was to-day actually charged on houses as well as land. The point in the circular to which he (Mr. Harold Cox) specially referred was the remark—

> "The fundamental principle upon which this Bill rests is that land is not and cannot become private property."

He would like to know whether the Government accepted that definition of the Bill. He doubted whether the Lord Advocate accepted it, and he did not believe that the Government was going to risk its reputation and the reputation of the whole of the Liberal Party by conducting a campaign against private property in land. He hoped the Lord Advocate would treat it rather as a modest measure for the reform of local taxation. If that were so then the measure could be argued on the assumption that private property in land was to be permitted to continue. How did land differ from other property in such a way as to justify this proposal? There had been a good deal of exaggeration as to the relative importance of land. Centuries ago, no doubt, land was of supreme importance when food was obtained by hunting wild animals, and then every man wanted many square miles for himself in order to get a meal. When they reached the pastoral stage of civilisation, the individual man could do with fewer square miles; in the agricultural stage still less land sufficed, and now that the manufacturing stage was reached men could do with very little land indeed per head. His point was that as civilisation advanced so the relative importance of land declined and the relative importance of capital increased. To bring the question home in a concrete manner, supposing an operative who had spent the greater part of his life in a particular industry were thrown out of work, what would it profit him if he were offered land which no farmer would take? What, too, was the use of land without capital to work it? One of the few Liberals who was defeated in the last election told him that very near the centre of a village in a Yorkshire valley there was a plot of land used for growing potatoes. The grasping landowner wished to put up the rent but the villagers would not hear of it. The rent of the land was threepence a year and the grasping landowner wanted another penny. He wished there were more pieces of land like that. Hon. Members cheered, but if they filled up a little island with human beings they could not expect the rent of land to remain low. Again, they were told that land was a monopoly. It was not true. The monopoly was in a particular piece of land, just as a particular pair of trousers belonging to a man was a monopoly. [An HON. MEMBER: You can make more trousers.] Yes, and there were other pieces of land. [An HON. MEMBER: You cannot make more land.] No, but there was more land ready made. [An HON. MEMBER: But you don't make it.] If one owner did not wish to sell there were others who wished to do so. Taking England and Wales alone he found that there were well over 1,000,000 separate landowners, and yet people said there was a monopoly of land. A large number of landowners every day were trying to sell their land and were unable to find purchasers. It was said that there were occasions where a particular piece of land was wanted to benefit the community. Of course there were, but surely when such cases arose it was the duty of the community to buy that piece of land at a fair price. If a community wanted something for its benefit it had no right to take it at the expense of a particular individual. What ought to be done was to enlarge the powers of local authorities so that they could buy land with less difficulty than at present. But the Bill did not do this. All the Bill did was to impose a tax with the object of forcing people to sell what they were reluctant to sell. He could imagine nothing more unjust than that a man who by his savings had purchased a piece of land should be taxed in order to compel him to sell it at a lower price to someone else. That was what was being proposed by this Bill. What had they been protesting against for the last two years? They had been protesting against the proposal that the State should interfere on behalf of the seller to make things dearer for the buyer. It was equally unjust for the State to interfere on behalf of the buyer to make things cheaper for him at the expense of the seller. That was not free trade. It was an inverted form of protection. If they once started on that process where would they stop? They might apply this doctrine of selling things cheap to labour in South Africa. Did hon. Gentlemen approve of the poll tax on natives to compel them to sell their labour cheap? He was told that this Bill was necessary because land was held back. Was labour never held back? Had they never heard of a strike? If they accepted the principle of this Bill it would be equally just to put a heavy tax on every man who was striking. Take the case of dealing with futures in wheat or iron. That was occurring every day. The business of a man whose machinery was perfect, whose employees were working sympathetically with him, and whose whole industry was well managed, might be brought suddenly to a standstill because somebody was holding up the raw material which he wanted for his work. Such an incident as that might cause widespread misery throughout the whole of a great industry. It might be the result of a ring extending all over the world, but in land there never was a ring. There was never such a thing as a ring of land in this country. There were local cases, of course; but surely there was a very great difference between the local injury caused by one or two landlords refusing to sell in a locality and the widespread injury that might be caused by holding back wheat or iron. [An HON. MEMBER: It is a question of degree.] That was his point. The promoters of the Bill were dealing with a trumpery matter. Cheap capital was much more important than cheap land from another aspect. It was more important for industrial development. Everybody knew that when money was cheap manufacturers were more likely to launch out, and their competition tended to increase the wages of the working-classes. He passed to a question upon which the greatest stress had always been laid, and that was the housing question. They had been told again and again that if they were to tax land values they would solve the housing problem. In his opinion it would act in entirely the contrary direction. In order to build houses they wanted not only a site, but capital to build with. He had got out the figures of some housing schemes, and those he would quote were not selected figures. He would take for example the case of a housing scheme near London where the land cost £400 per acre, and the construction of the roads and sewers cost another £400. Seventeen houses per acre had been built on that land costing £300 apiece. Taking interest at 5 per cent.

they would find that the total annual cost of the scheme worked out at £17 7s. per house. The cost of the site of each house was £1 3s. 6d. Therefore, supposing they got the land absolutely for nothing the whole saving would be 23s. 6d. upon each house. On the other hand, supposing they had their capital cheaper by one per cent. they would effect a saving of £3 9s. 5d. He could give numerous instances in other places where the saving by reducing the interest on capital by 1 per cent. would be two or three times greater than if the land was obtained for nothing. So that it was clear they would not solve the housing problem if they got their land for nothing. He was doing his best with others to promote a housing scheme for rural districts, but at present it was hung up because they had not the necessary capital, and if any of those who were so anxious to tax land values would only lend them the money at 3 per cent. they could go ahead. He had been asked how he would make capital cheaper. He had no sovereign remedy except to avoid the blunders which made capital dear. They could not have the luxury of a war without paying for it. The money that ought to have been spent in building houses for the working classes had been blown away in South Africa, and they would never get it back again; neither would they get back to the economic position they were in before the war except by steady work and careful saving. There was another way in which the taxation of ground values affected the housing question. Anyone familiar with the practical working of the building trade would know that it was the habit of builders to raise money upon ground rents. By doing that they were able to get their capital cheaper, and why? Because ground rents were a trustee investment, and as there was a large area of supply they got capital at a lower rate. If they adopted the principle of this Bill or the proposals of the hon. Member for the Elland Division, they would subject ground rents to all the uncertainties of local taxation, and they would cease to be a subject of trustee investment because of the uncertainty, and the price builders would have to pay for capital would rise. His next point was that of the unearned increment. The hon. Member for Renfrew gave some awful cases from Glasgow, and he could give some awful cases in London and elsewhere, but he thought the Lord Advocate would admit that hard cases would make bad law. But was it only land that got unearned increment? Had they never heard of the unearned increment on the Stock Exchange and of the millions made there by buying cheap and selling dear? There was this great difference between Stock Exchange securities and land, that although they could rig the market on the Stock Exchange by false rumours and lying telegrams, they could not rig the market in land. They had been told that although Stock Exchange values fluctuated up and down, land always rose in value. He would ask those who really believed that to put their money on their creed and go into the market and purchase land. If the tendency of land was to always rise in value why did they waste money in their own business or in buying Stock Exchange shares? But, after all what relevance had the unearned increment to this Bill, which did not deal with it at all? If they were in earnest about taxing the unearned increment, they would make a valuation of the whole country, and provide that in future the unearned increment should be taxed or confiscated, but this measure did not do that. This Bill taxed at an equal pound rate land whether it had fallen or risen in value, and it was therefore irrelevant to use arguments about the unearned increment in connection with these proposals. This Bill imposed a special tax upon persons who owned land. He laid stress upon the word persons because people imagined that they were taxing the land itself. Land did not pay taxation; persons paid taxes, and all this talk about land being made for man came to this, that they intended to put a penal tax upon a specially selected class of the community, which class already paid 1s. in the £. income-tax and who would be called upon to pay an additional income-tax of 2s. in the £. He would ask how would hon. Members deal with the case he would now put before them which would inevitably come up not once but a hundred times. Supposing a workman saved money and bought his house, and another workman, instead of buying a house, put his savings into the savings bank. Under this Bill they were proposing to tax one at the rate of 2s. in the £. and the other nothing at all. He had never yet received an answer to that question. Again, suppose a man had two daughters and he left to one £20 a year in ground rents and to the other £20 a year in Consols. The girl with Consols paid nothing, but the girl with £20 in ground rents would have to pay £2 a year. It was all very well to use metaphysical arguments about land, but there was something far more important, and that was to maintain justice between individuals, and until the right hon. Gentleman was able to tell them where the justice lay in picking out one individual for a penal tax and leaving another individual untaxed, he thought they were justified in voting against this Bill. Last year the Lord Advocate partly suggested that Clause 7 of this Bill was largely a matter of detail, but he could hardly believe that that was his real view. That Clause provided that existing contracts should be torn up as far as this Bill was concerned. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would not hold that the fulfilment of a contract was a matter of detail. Surely a Government which had maintained the sanctity of contracts in South Africa, even though they were virtually contracts of slavery, would not destroy the sanctity of contracts in order to shift the burden of rates and taxes in Scotland? Yet if they rejected this clause the whole agitation would tumble to pieces.

MR. TREVELYAN: No, no.

*MR. HAROLD COX said he knew the hon. Member for the Elland Division would not agree with him, but he was referring to the Scottish agitation. He had watched the opinions expressed in the Scotch papers on this subject, and the impression was that as soon as they knocked out Clause 7 the Bill would disappear. The aim of this measure was to get at the great landowners, but if they left out Clause 7 the landowner disappeared, and they would be left face to face with the ordinary ratepayer, who would have to pay this burden and would be called upon to pay two taxes instead of one. It was a great mistake to assume that only great landowners were involved. The Prudential Insurance Company had £4,000,000 invested in ground rents, and £6,000,000 on mortgage, together with other land investments, making a total of £13,000,000 in land out of total assets of £51,000,000. Those were the kind of people who would be hit by this Clause, as well as every working man who had bought his own house. And who would be benefited? This Bill would benefit people like the Beits and Barnatos, and shareholders in great industrial concerns paying 30 per cent. dividends. Those were the people whom it was proposed to benefit at the expense of working men who had bought their own houses. This was essentially a capitalists' movement. [Cries of "No, no."] It was very significant that some of the most prominent supporters of this movement were among the most prominent capitalists in the country. They would obtain an advantage, because their taxation would be reduced by virtue of the penal taxation imposed on landowners. People talked about getting access to the land. What did it mean? It meant that they would compel various landlords at present to sell land cheap. Would the people generally be benefited by that? No. The people who had made their money on the Stock Exchange would benefit. This Bill would merely transfer the land from the old landowners to the new capitalists. He came now to the Minority Report of the Royal Commission. The Lord Advocate last year based his case largely on that Report. He should like to know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman accepted the whole of that Report, or whether, in quoting the Report, he felt justified in taking out pieces to suit his argument and rejecting the rest. What the Royal Commission proposed was something absolutely and totally different from this Bill. It condemned Bills of this character, and it proposed instead a small tax on land which must be strictly limited by Act of Parliament, and which must be accompanied by a large Imperial subsidy. The two things were to go hand in hand, and the small tax on land values was only declared to be just because of the large Imperial subsidy. Was that the view which the Lord Advocate accepted? It was utterly unfair to quote in support of such a measure as this the Report of the Royal Commission. It was equally unfair to quote the case of New Zealand, for in that country there was a land-tax which was a substitute for the income-tax. Did hon. Members propose that their land-tax should be a substitute for the income-tax? They proposed it as an addition to the income-tax. The proposal here was to pick out the owners of land and saddle them with a double share of taxation. In favour of the Bill it was argued that it would shift the burden of taxation from the suburbs to the centre. That sounded very nice for the people living in the suburbs, but what about the struggling ratepayers who were doing their best to make a living in the centre? Where was the justice of relieving somebody in the suburbs at the expense of somebody in the centre? It would have the inevitable effect of destroying open spaces. [Cries of "No."] Unless they exempted all open spaces the Bill certainly would lead to their sale for building. In regard to unoccupied land it was asked why it should not be taxed. It was because it was yielding no revenue. Like the Royal Commission, he saw no objection to a small tax on unoccupied land. It must be very small, or it would be unfair. If a man had no revenue from what he owned it was contrary to our system of taxation to put a tax on it. The Royal Commission, in the final words of their report, said—

> "This proposal would conduce to the removal of some of the widely spread misconceptions which seem to prevail, not only in political circles, but among economic authorities and responsible statesmen; for . . . . it would show that there is no large undeveloped source of taxation available for local purposes, and still less for national purposes."

That was the verdict of the minority of the Royal Commission which the supporters of this Measure were so fond of quoting. It was because of that verdict he began his speech by saying that this agitation blocked the way of real reform. They were asked to pass the Bill in order to remove widespread misconceptions from the minds of responsible statesmen. It was better that their statesmen should think out the question and remove these misconceptions themselves. The Bill which the Royal Commission recommended was the maximum they would ever get from any Government. Was it worth getting? Was it worth while wasting their efforts on such a trumpery measure as this? There were many defects in the present rating system which needed reform, and the ideal to be aimed at was the devising of such a system of taxation that every citizen should contribute to the expense of the State in proportion to his means. In other words the ideal to be worked for was a universal and graduated income-tax—a tax under which everybody would pay something, some regular subscription to the great club to which they all belonged and which they called the State, but under which the subscription would be payable in proportion to the means of payment. Such a tax would enable them to sweep away at once the taxes on tea, sugar, and cocoa, and abolish the coal tax. It would enable them to prevent any further rise in local rates and to remove the worst anomalies of the local rating system. He did not think it would be just to use such a tax to abolish rates altogether, for he held that rates ultimately fell upon the owner of the soil, for if there were no rates, the owner of the soil would get more rent. Therefore to abolish rates altogether would be merely to put in the landowner's pocket something to which he had no right. But by preventing the future increase of rates it was clear that they were relieving the landowner of a contingent liability. Therefore they were justified in imposing a local death duty so as to compensate the community for the relief it had given to the landlord. Such a death duty would enable the community to secure in the best of all possible ways the unearned increment of the land. In addition such a reform would introduce a system of taxation which all the community would recognise as equitable to every class. He ventured, without going into detail, to suggest this as a radical solution of the whole problem of national and local taxation. He believed it was possible, as well as desirable, and because he believed that he appealed to his hon. friends around him not to block the path of progress by supporting a Bill which was based on antiquated metaphysics and false economics—a Bill which, if it were passed into law, would inflict cruel injustice on thousands of their fellow citizens possessed of only scanty means, and would compel them to pay beyond other members of the community for the crime—their sole crime—of having ventured to invest their savings in the soil of their native land.

On the return of Mr. SPEAKER after the usual interval,

*SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said he wished to second the Motion which had been made that the Second Reading of this Bill should be taken six months hence. He would certainly not emulate previous speakers in occupying the time of the House at the great length which they had done. The mover and seconder of the Second Reading had repeated arguments of the most elementary character, which had not in one iota added to the strength of the case generally put forward in favour of this confiscatory Bill. He would refer to only one or two points brought forward by the mover and seconder of the Bill, one of whom had given the House a startling description of the sufferings of the poor by an imaginary case of a man who held up land available for building for two hundred years. The hon. Member who seconded this Bill wished them to think that the ground landlord might, at his own sweet will, and at any period he chose come down with a fell swoop and demand a higher ground rent upon the land. He took away the whole effect of the Bill, moreover, by saying that the proprietor of the land always managed to bargain himself out of any burden in spite of any Act of Parliament. The hon. Member had given them an instance in Aberdeen of how a certain advantageous bargain was made by a Land Association against the Harbour Commissioners of that City. The Land Association of Aberdeen, if he was rightly informed, was one largely owned by small investors who belonged to the working classes. Were a powerful Corporation like the Harbour Commissioners of Aberdeen, the people on whose behalf Parliament must step in to enable them to make an easier bargain with shareholders of the Land Association? Was that the reason why they were going to introduce this novel and unheard of machinery into the taxation and the rateable arrangements of the country? The seconder had given them some harrowing accounts of the housing of the working classes, as if he were the only hon. Member who wished to improve the conditions of working men. The hon. Member had said that all the people in Scotland were in favour of this measure, except perhaps a few land owners. For himself, he wished to treat the Bill as a Scottish measure, and he would have something to say of the genesis of the Bill in Scotland. He spoke on behalf of no landowner or wealthy corporation, but in the interests of great educational institutions, of many charities, of friendly societies, of many investors among the most thrifty and humble classes of the community, and also for many trade unions whose funds were thus invested. The Bill was started some years ago in Glasgow by a certain ex-Bailie Ferguson, who was the main mover in this agitation. How had he obtained the adhesion of the Town Council? They had his own explanation before the Commission in 1898. Replying to a question as to what views the Town Council held, he said—

> "They held four years ago that they would not support such a doctrine at all, and I told them that I would change their convictions or their seats, and I have done it."

He was asked, "And they have changed their convictions for the sake of keeping their seats?" He answered—

> "I am not bound to know the reasons, but in point of fact they run out and vote for taxation of land values."

Was that the way that hon. Members thought that public opinion should be manufactured? Were they proud of the support of the Glasgow Town Council obtained by means such as that? What did the Bill propose to do? It was called a Bill for the taxation of land values, but as a matter of fact it was confined to taxation of sites in urban districts. Something lay behind the discrepancy between the title of the Bill and its real purpose. There was a feud between the advocates of the taxation of land values generally and those who confined themselves to the taxation of urban sites. He wished hon. Members opposite to observe that hostility between two sections of their own Party. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Northwich Division of Cheshire had argued for the application of the principle to rural as well as to urban land In a letter to the *Speaker* on the point and dealing with the term "site values" he had said—

> "As a matter of fact the land immediately outside our urban boundaries is the largest field for the beneficial operation of the coming change in the law. The man who first started this pestilential notion of distinguishing urban from other land and the man who first spoke of 'site values' are as bad as Alexander the

Coppersmith. But what in the name of Lincoln's Inn and all the other Inns is a site? If I were to use language of appropriate warmth in condemnation of the phrase and you were to print it, no respectable person would ever read the *Speaker* again."

The Bill proposed to value sites separately, and to rate them upon a yearly value of 4 per cent. of their capital valuation. But this was a small part of the Bill. Was it justified by any full and carefull investigation? They had had quotations from various authorities, but he would ask the House to examine what they were. The opinion of the Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, which had been cited in favour of this Bill, was discounted by the dissentient remarks of the late Lord Salisbury and of Mr. (now Lord) Goschen. Lord Salisbury, dealing with the question of the rating of vacant land, said it had been suggested that it should be rated upon its capital value and not on its income. "This suggestion," the noble Marquess said, "had been introduced into the report just before it was signed, and he could not find that it was based upon any evidence before the Committee." Viscount Goschen also wished to record his "dissent from the recommendation of the report with reference to the rating of vacant lands." A much more important committee was the Select Committee on Town Holdings, which reported in 1892 in a sense directly opposite to the preliminary part of this measure. He now came to the Commission which had been referred to, that upon Local Taxation. The hon. Member for Preston had forgotten that the report which he had quoted was the Minority Report, and that the Commission as a whole reported against this plan. The hon. Member had pointed out how completely insufficient was even the report of the minority of the Commission to support the present Bill, because they stated that the grounds for the new proposals were chiefly sentimental and political, and they proposed that even if adopted this new Land Value Tax should be borne half by the owner and half by the occupier. The proposal to tax land values deserved careful criticism and consideration, and they must look at what it was intended to achieve and what was the object of it. It was argued that it would prevent the holding up of vacant spaces. He thought in regard to that, self-interest might be left to act. How could any holding up of vacant spaces in urban districts which defrauded the receiver of rates do otherwise than involve loss to the owner of property? If the landowner held it up, he did so because he thought that by dispensing with the return for a certain period he would afterwards get a larger return which would recoup him for his abstinence. If he did so, it was because he thought that the buildings which would afterwards be erected on it would be of such enhanced value that it would pay him to hold up. Would that not pay the rating authorities also? How could they fail to get the same advantage? The seconder of the Motion had adduced the case of the School Board of Cathcart. Was that hon. Member aware that the School Board could by a very simple process, under compulsory powers, have got the land at an arbitrator's valuation? If the School Board paid anything like the enhanced value which had been quoted they would have been guilty of a great dereliction of duty, of which he was certain they were not guilty. This part of the Bill would achieve very little. The machinery by which it was proposed to put it in force was bad. It introduced the doubtful principle of assessing the rateable value on capital value. Great injustice might be wrought. Land fluctuated in value, and in the neighbourhood of towns frequently an exaggerated value was put upon it. Supposing a piece of vacant land was taxed for twenty years on an exaggerated value, and when it came to be sold the real value was much less, were they going to return to the owner the overpaid rates? It would discourage one great aid to health in cities—namely, vacant spaces and garden grounds. No greater blow could be inflicted on the projectors of garden cities than the passing of this Bill. But the important blot upon the measure was its confiscatory element. That was the salient point by means of which and of which alone the originators of it would achieve the end they had in view. The Bill was pushed by two leagues—one in England and one in Scotland — formerly called the Land Restoration Leagues, and now reconstituted as the Leagues for the Taxation of Land Values. Their objects were shown by the evidence of Mr. Peter Burt, J.P.

before the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. His examination was as follows:—

> "Do you come here in any of your public capacities, or as President of the Scottish Land Restoration Union?—As President of the Scottish Land Restoration Union.
>
> "To whom are you going to restore the land?—To the people.
>
> "By this proposal?—Yes.
>
> "But this proposal will not restore it to the people, will it?—What people want land for in the sense of ownership is not for the land but for the rent, and if we restore the rent to the people we think that we do all that is necessary to satisfy them.
>
> "But are you by this proposal to restore the land to the community which does not now own the right of receiving rent?—We are to restore the rent to the whole community.
>
> "But all I understand this proposal as put before us to do, is to shift the burden of rating from one class of owner to another?—The proposal starts with altering the basis of taxation in relation to rentals, that is, instead of paying as at present, on the annual rent they receive from the tenant, they shall pay upon the annual value of the ground; that is the beginning of the principle or the foundation of the principle for altering the incidence of taxation altogether.
>
> "What is to be the next step?—Increase the tax upon the value of the ground.
>
> "Until you take it all?—Yes; until you take twenty shillings in the pound."

There was the same class of evidence from Bailie John Ferguson, who said that he held that nothing short of 20s. in the £ would be a complete settlement of the question. They were not, therefore, left in any doubt as to purposes of the Bill; and what was to be the end of it, even if this confiscation were justified? It would turn the municipality into a landlord, receiving rent by way of taxation. Could there be a more capricious, a more tyrannical, a more hard-hearted landlord than the tax receiver? What became of fixity of tenure? They were between the horns of a dilemma. Either every man would hold his land subject to the will of the rating authority, or else he would be allowed to acquire certain rights, it might be leasehold rights, in the land. The moment a man acquired these rights they became the subject of new purchase and sale. New rights were established, new increment began, and they had all their work to do over again. The real vice of the Bill was that it rested upon confiscation and robbery. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister were in his place he would appeal to him on this matter. He had had the honour of the friendship of the Prime Minister longer perhaps than any other Member of the House, and he was proud to count among his memories those who had gone before him and were great builders and architects of the prosperity of Glasgow—men who made it their aim to encourage the thrift and industry of Scotsmen. Did the Prime Minister think that those whose memories they both revered would have looked with favour on a Bill like this, or would have deemed it worthy of our national character? He would appeal to hon. Members below the gangway. He would use no language of fulsome flattery to them, but regarding them as men of strenuous work, of high equipment, of zealous energy and of strong conviction, he could only regret that such powers were not added to the assets of his own Party. He believed in their sincerity, and trusted that they would give him credit for equal sincerity in his convictions. But he would put this question to them—Was it not the case that if Clause 7 were cut out of the Bill they would tear it up and throw it in the face of the Government? [Cries of "No" and "Yes."] The reply of "Yes" was, he believed, the honest answer. They and the Government knew that that was the only clause that would enable the purpose of this Bill to be carried out, and they would never carry out that purpose merely by a change of the future incidence of taxation. As one of the speakers had told them, property would always bargain itself out of new burdens, and the object in view could only be achieved by taking it from the pockets of the actual holders who were bound by existing bargains. In fact, they could only achieve the principle of the Bill and meet the views of its supporters below the gangway by accepting this principle. They had had on the front Bench opposite a good many instances of trying to ride two horses. It was an experiment which the Prime Minister the other day said was impossible. But they had seen it done in the circus, and it was possible perhaps that it might be achieved in the Parliamentary arena. But he defied anyone to ride two horses down two different roads. He urged the Government to be bold enough to resist this dangerous and confiscatory Bill, and, on the other hand, he appealed to hon. Gentlemen below the gangway not to be deluded by conciliatory promises that were not likely to be fulfilled. Personally, if he were in their place, he would rather have to face downright, plain, and sincere opposition than conciliatory phrases which were not to be followed by any effective action.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs) said he had listened with some surprise to the speech which had just been made. He entirely agreed with his hon. friend—whom he was glad to welcome to this House—that it was a pity that on an afternoon devoted to a Bill which had been more than once before the House the speeches should have been of such length. He did not propose to follow the last speakers into those personal topics which they had shown a tendency to introduce; he would rather consider the Bill on its merits. One point, however, the hon. Member had evidently kept well in his mind—the view that the Bill was one, as he described it, of confiscation; and it could surely only have been by inadvertence that he had forgotten to refer to certain other terror-striking phrases, as for instance, the sacredness of the British Constitution. The hon. Member appeared to have been seriously concerned about the personal element: he had introduced a variety of characters. He had referred to Bailie Fergusson, to Alexander the coppersmith, and to Bailie Burt, while the hon. Member for Preston had taken fright, not at such homely characters, but at the great name of Henry George. Assuming that Henry George, Bailie Fergusson, and Bailie Burt would have approved of this Bill, it might all be very disconcerting, but do let them proceed to consider whether it was a good Bill. He would refer for a moment to the language as to confiscation used in all sincerity by his hon. friend opposite. After all, he hoped they would survive the terror with which he evidently intended to inspire them. The principle of the Bill was a familiar one. Parliament had discussed it time after time, and a majority of a Conservative House of Commons had voted for it before. The conditions, however, under which the Bill had been previously considered, and those under which it was considered that day, were strangely different. The opposition of the Bill today seemed to be attenuated in dimensions but accentuated in quality. The views of Scotland on the subject had been referred to. He knew them, he supposed, as well as his hon. friend, and one instance of his untenable position he might give. Was there, he asked, one Member representing the city of Glasgow who would oppose the principle of the Bill as it had been expounded to day? There was only one man from Glasgow who would go into the lobby against the Bill, and he was the representative, not of the community, but of the University of that city. Was it for a gentleman so situated to get up in the House and characterise as a measure of confiscation one which had been promoted for half a generation by the humane and generous men who had constituted the corporation of Glasgow, and supported by the entire body of its Parliamentary representatives? There had been a growth of public opinion recently on this subject, and why? It was accounted for by the fact that in recent years, owing to social demands, there had been an enormous increase of local taxation for poor law, local government education, and other purposes, and that since 1899 there had been added to the Imperial burdens of the country another crushing debt for Imperial causes. It was those things which had forced the overburdened ratepayer and taxpayer to consider whether it might not be possible, without confiscation, robbery, or any injustice whatever, to alter the incidence of taxation, at least, in such a way as would readjust it in a manner fairer as among all classes of the community. He asked the House to remember that it was on the report—it was true it was a minority report—of such men as Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the late Lord Kinross, Sir George Murray, and Sir Edward Hamilton, that the Bill was substantially framed. [Cries of "No."] It was possible for hon. Members to argue this matter, but argument did not consist in explosive interruptions. This Bill was not to be characterised by those hard terms which had been employed, when at the back of it there was the recorded opinion of the men of the highest authority in the State. The acuteness of the situation was one, as the House had been told, not only arising out of the increase of rating, but bearing upon the general alteration of social conditions. There had been report after report pointing out how serious was the situation in regard to this subject, not only as a rating question, but as a social question. Such rating of land tenures as was proposed in the Bill would act as a direct incentive to the owners to part with the land, to the manifest advantage, in the majority of cases, of the rest of the community; while in the meantime this valuable property would contribute to the rates something more nearly approaching its proper share, and the burden to other ratepayers would be *pro tanto* diminished. The very fact of taxation on real value would put land into the market, and the competition, moreover, which would follow in the sale of building land would necessarily bring its feuing rate more within the reach of public demand. The present rates for ground were a consequence of no expenditure of money or work on the part of the landowners but admittedly of the activity, enterprise and industry of the townspeople themselves. Could it be fairly called confiscation if a landowner, who chose to hang up his sites for a time and then get for them twenty times their initial cost, was asked to contribute something in the way of rating during the course of that increase — an increase which at present was being brought about by schemes in which he himself had not not been a partner and on which he had not expended a penny? The opinion of the Government in regard to the Bill was that the sifting of the subject by Commissions and by public discussion in Parliament had at least not put back the clock of this reform. The crudeness which sprang from a quick recoil from manifest injustice was disappearing from the scheme. That violence which was apt to spring from a bitterness of protest against our present social arrangements was also disappearing; and it had, in the opinion of the Government, been becoming clearer and clearer that the times were ripe for this reform. These were the feelings with which they approached the Bill. Not only had inquiry been made and concluded, not only had anything approaching violence been eliminated from the scheme, but the broad fact remained that the Bill could now be properly considered in the light of the inquiries which had been made—and not upon vague and terrifying notions of expropriation or confiscation. It was when the matter was considered in the light of the social considerations of the hour that the principle of the bill struck them as going in the direction not merely of social expediency but almost of social necessity. As to the attack made on the Bill, how did the matter stand in respect of unoccupied land. Did not unoccupied land in or near a city become valuable because of the privileges which surround its possession with comforts, amenity, means of communication, schemes of health, lighting, drainage, and all the other consequences of popular energy and expenditure—energy and expenditure to neither of which had the owner of the land, as such, been a contributor. So far from being a partner, indeed, the owner of such land was rather a parasite on the community. It was said that no new source of revenue would be tapped. He was not so sure of that. He would cite one illustration showing the evil of the present system. Unbuilt on land in Edinburgh was said to be rated at £2,750 per annum, bringing in £344 a year. If it were rated at 4 per cent. on the assessable capital value it would bring in at least £27,500 a year. Similarly at Leith the difference between the two systems was the difference between £350 and £24,000. In his opinion there was to be found in this direction a new and not improper source of revenue from taxation. The Bill would substitute a real for the existing fictitious system of valuation. In the words of the Royal Commission, present rates indisputably hampered building which was necessary to life and business of every kind, and anything which tended to discourage building must make houses fewer, worse, and dearer. He submitted that he had established the proposition that the social reform which accompanied the Bill was almost greater in its effect than the change in the incidence of taxation. An appeal had been made to Scottish independence. He happened to know a good deal about his own country, and he had never found the relation of the population to the law of the country better expressed than by Mr. Sherwell, who said—

> "The spectacle of one-half of the entire nation living under overcrowded conditions, while almost whole counties are preserved as deer forests and private parks, is as astounding as it is happily rare. Eight per cent. of overcrowded persons, which is the figure for Wales, pales into comparative insignificance beside 47 per cent., which is the measure of overcrowding in Scotland."

One half the nation in Scotland were crowded together at the rate of more than two persons to a room, while the whole population, if spread out, would have no less than four and one-third acres for every man, woman, and child in the kingdom. Those were conditions which Scotland could put forward a claim to have remedied, and, though this Bill would not accomplish all, let them begin. Appeals to independence were all very well, but he knew no better use to which an independent people could apply their brains and energies than to the upsetting of such a condition of things as that in Scotland. He knew it was said that the proposals of such a Bill as this were fantastic, and that the thing was impossible. It reminded him of a saying of Charles Reade—

> "The impossible has clothed itself in fact and has gone through the hollow mockery of taking place."

Yes, it had taken place—this very thing—in Germany, in our Colonies, and elsewhere. There had been vast schemes of re-housing in Glasgow, and enormous expenses had been incurred, but they had touched only the fringe of the evil. The civic barrel had had great resources poured into it, but the barrel leaked, the land value had not been hit. Every improvement in social conditions gave an opportunity for putting an extra value on land. The action Glasgow had taken in the past, and their attitude in the present, were alike meritorious. The holding up of land would largely disappear, and under this Bill every inducement would be held out for more and better buildings. The first requisite was to get a proper system of valuation, to substitute a real for a fictitious valuation, and the first four clauses of the Bill before the House substantially operated in that way. The impractability of the thing was disposed of by the experience of Mr. Henry, the assessor of Glasgow, whose opinion confirmed his own in all these arbitration cases, that it was not at all an impracticable thing to settle the value of the land and then settle the value of the houses upon the land. The Government approved of the principle of the first four clauses, and they thought that there was no reason why the new system of valuation proposed should not be proceeded with without delay. The next clause substantially gave power to put on taxation equivalent to a penny in the £ on capital value, but the Government were of opinion that a year at least should be allowed for the operation of the clauses affecting valuation before empowering assessment. This valuation would go through the ordinary run of appeals, in which principles might have to be adjusted and settled by the Courts, and, if they postponed until 1907 the assessment clause and made the valuation clauses operative now, there would, in the interim, be effected a most valuable reform in valuation, the principles of which would be settled, so that, when the assessment came to be laid in the following year, it might be done smoothly and without friction. As to the last clause, dealing with existing contracts, they were confronted with an enormous body of skilled opinion. The Majority and Minority Reports of the Royal Commission on Taxation and the separate Scottish Report all concurred in viewing with unfeigned hostility on grounds of principle the idea of attacking existing contracts. He looked upon this with considerable anxiety. He had not varied in his opinion on this matter. When the Bill was before the House two years ago he stated that he was against interference with existing contracts. The Minority Report said that existing contracts should be absolutely respected, but that in the case of future contracts the holder should be entitled to make the deduction—substantially as in Clause 7. The existing system in Scotland might have its defects. He thought it had its defects, and there was scope for a large and far-reaching measure dealing with the relations between superior and vassal, and even providing for the commutation of feu-duties. The Government proposed to follow the skilled opinion referred to. It did not matter who paid. The thing was what was going to pay. The land itself was going to pay, and the provision by way of deduction, by the man who paid, from some other body who got something out of it, had no effect upon the community as a whole, and, accordingly, the principle of the clause was intact. The seventh clause of the Bill was, no doubt, a protest against the system under which land had been held up, and profits had been got. But he desired to associate this great and salutary reform with no violence whatever to existing contracts, and with no invasion of rights sanctioned by the State. Under these rights sanctioned by the State interests had grown up, investments of money in trade unions and friendly societies, and great trusts like the Heriot Trust and others. All these things had grown up on the theory that the State had guaranteed a fixed net monetary return. But new contracts they might affect, and they ought to affect—and he proposed if the Bill went to the Grand Committee on Law to insert a single line making the seventh clause operative with regard to future transactions in land. He did not say that the Bill was a panacea for all existing evils. But it went near to the roots of many evils. This was a new Parliament, and they had been forced in recent times to consider principles at their foundations. They had been taunted with one-sided free trade. Yes: but what was the other side. It was stated by Cobden himself towards the close of his life in the sentence—

> "I would take Adam Smith in hand and I would have a league for free trade in land, just as we had a league for free trade in corn."

The object of this Bill was more and more to force land into the market, so as to make land transferable by depriving owners of the pecuniary advantage they had in holding it up as against the community itself. They had been taunted with parochialism. Yes: perhaps this was parochialism. But this modest, simple measure had, in the opinion of the Government, elements in it which might prove of more abiding welfare than those more ostentatious efforts which had provoked noise and tumult to begin with, and which had ended in exhaustion and prostration. Those great, much-heralded, much-boasted efforts had left untouched that weakness which was at the very heart of the social state It was to that weakness the new Parliament must address itself, and the Bill was welcomed by him, and would have the approval of the Government on the Second Reading, because it was one of, he hoped, not a few measures of like spirit, under which a quiet and determined effort was being made towards reaching the heart of our social trouble, and alleviating and curing it.

Mr. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) said he intervened in this debate because, in all probability, he had more to do with, and knew more about, land values than any other Member of the House. He warned hon. Members that, while no doubt some of the principles of this Bill were sound, it was not going to accomplish all or anything like all that was claimed for it. One would think, from the speeches which had been made, that this Bill was going a long way to solve the housing question, to increase wages, to reduce rates, to help the widow and orphan, and generally to bring about the millenium. All he could tell them was that it was going to do nothing of the kind. As the result of several years experience he had discovered that people had an idea that, when a lease ran out, and the property fell back into the hands of the ground landlord, a great injustice had been done to the person who was the lessee. In fact one hon. Member had said the landlords stole the property. In London he would point out, in the first place, there was every opportunity of buying freehold land. But supposing a private owner had leased a plot of land on which the lessee intended to erect property which he was to have the use of for ninety-nine years, he had only to set up a sinking fund, to indemnify himself when the property fell in. Hon. Members were apt to overlook the cumulative power of compound interest. One-fifth of a penny in the £ at 4 per cent. for ninety-nine years would pay for that, and, therefore, there was no very serious grievance there. The House was told that this Bill was going to bring building land into the market. In his judgment the tax proposed was not sufficient to do that. In his opinion the community ought to get practically the whole of the unearned increment of the land, but the Bill was going to do very little in that direction. Under this Bill they were going to get only 10 per cent. of it and it was intended to levy 10 per cent. in other directions where there was no justification for it. He could take hon. Members to estates with 100 houses let at £50 rental each per annum with a ground rent of £10 each. The head rent on the whole of the estate was probably not more than £5, which secured the reversion of the estate at the end of ninety-nine years. All the contribution that would be got out of that would be 10 per cent of £5. In the case of the leasehold ground rent of £10 on each house, precisely the same rate would have to be paid as in the case of the man who had the reversion. The middle man, the leaseholder, would have to pay on any increased value of the land and would get no advantage whatever. Then there was another curious provision in the Bill. It was proposed only to charge if the lease were more than thirty-one years. Surely, if the lease were short, the landlord would come into the benefit all the sooner, and yet he was to be the man who was to be relieved. They might take localities where improvements had been effected at the cost of the community, and the money was borrowed for twenty-five or thirty years. The tenant in that case would pay the interest for the repayment of the loan, and according to the Bill he was not to charge back upon the landlord anything at all. That meant that the nearer the direct interest of the landlord the less he had to pay, the longer it was the more he paid. Was that common-sense and reasonable? He ventured to think it was not. Then take the case most prevalent in Scotland where there was practically a permanent rent change. There was no reversion there. It would be most unjust to break contracts in order to levy a tax. Last year there was something very much like an understanding that that clause was to come out of the Bill, but it was in the Bill again this year. He did not object to the taxation of site values. He believed it was sound that they should adopt some method of getting this unearned increment, especially in our large towns. There was no reason whatever why, for the future, the additional value given to land by the expenditure and labour of the community should not all of it be got into the pocket of the community without injustice being done to anybody. But the promoters of this Bill would not get by it the advantages they thought in many directions. They could not dodge the laws of political economy. If they put on these taxes as provided for in the Bill, then, of course, for the future everybody who invested in or created ground rents would invest in them or create them with a full knowledge of what was before them, and would arrange accordingly. If it were true that the rates and taxes always came out of the landlord the position would be practically the same. If, on the other hand, it was true that the tenant paid the rates and taxes, then they could be sure that when the landlord was making his bargain with the tenant they would come out of the tenant just the same. But if they could not dodge the laws of political economy in that way they might get a much larger proportion of the cost of local administration put upon great central sites which were increasing in value. Another thing was that when anyone was engaged in laying out a large estate a very important matter was the amount he could get for the ground rents. If he could sell the ground rents at a good price he sold the leasehold interest in the houses at a much lower price. There were cases in which the leasehold interest in a house was sold at a lower price than it cost to build the house. The profit was got out of the ground rent, but the net result was that the total cost, including the ground rent, worked out as well as if it were a freehold. If they diminished the price to be got for the ground rent, as they would by rating it, they would thereby increase the price that would have to be paid for the house. These things cut in many ways, and he did not want the House to form incorrect views as to what was going to occur. The main principle of taxing site values was right and just. It would be inequitable, however, to disturb the whole of the existing contracts. As for the future, those who had to deal with the matter would know how to take care of themselves. He took a great amount of interest in this question, but he had not a penny of interest in ground rents himself, except that he had to pay a ground rent on his own house to one of the large landowners of London, but he wished to warn his hon. friends against entertaining the idea that they were about to start the millennium by the passing of this Bill.

MR. PARKER (Halifax) said that in making his first speech he would not begin by saying that he did not intend to make a long speech, because when Members offered that statement they usually followed the exactly opposite course. Although he and his friends did not expect the Bill to bring about the millennium, they realised that it was a step in the right direction. The present system of rating in our towns and cities for local purposes was in the opinion of those acquainted with municipal life antiquated and unjust. Some years ago he took it upon himself early in his connection with municipal life to compare the rateable values of the areas where villas were erected with the values of the slum areas, and he found that, as a matter of fact, the poorer classes of the community under the existing system of rating paid much heavier rates according to the ground they occupied than the wealthier classes. Whatever the Bill might or might not do, it would in time, he thought, remove that condition of things. The landowning classes obtained the greatest advantages from municipal developments at the expense of the ratepayers. During the past thirty years rates of the towns had been doubled, and they must of necessity go on increasing, for every fresh piece of legislation passed by this House must tend to send up municipal rates, and unless some new source of taxation was found it was utterly useless to cry out against the continual increase. What would be the result if this Bill were in operation to-day? Take the case of his own town. Some years ago a street was cut through a piece of vacant land, the price paid for which was about £4 per yard. In a very few years the piece of land went up to £10 per yard, and during the past two years the council had paid £20 a yard for some of it for street improvements. The average price at which the whole land had been sold had considerably more than doubled. Certain hon. Members had argued that in such a case the landlord would be able to shift the whole of the tax proposed. He would not say that in some cases the landlord would not shift it, but he certainly could not in regard to the pieces of land which grew rapidly in value in the centres of large towns. No doubt there had been a rise in the wages of skilled workmen during the past twenty years, but fully 30 per cent. of that was required for increased rent. They could not hope to see rents reduced unless they dealt with the rating problem. The present rates in towns were a tax on the thrift and industry of the people, and there was probably not a town in the United Kingdom where, if such a scheme was in operation, the rates would not be reduced by at least 10 or 15 per cent. in a few years. That would be something at least to accomplish. The present methods of local rating blocked improvements rather than helped them, formed and tended to continue unemployment, where otherwise employment might be found. Of course it was true that the development of municipal tramways, electricity, etc., found some portion of profits in relief of rates, but it could not keep pace with the ever-growing expenditure unless municipal activity were extended on a much larger scale. While he and others did not regard this measure as the only necessary thing—indeed, they looked upon it as only the beginning of social reform—yet they regarded it as of some value to improve the condition of the people. The hon. Member for Glasgow University spoke of it as a measure of confiscation, but what about the confiscation of values by the men who took value from the community—the land value which had accrued through nothing which the landlord himself had done, but through the industry, thrift, and activity of the people individually and collectively? The question of land values had been debated over and over again, and he was satisfied that they should not talk much more about the measure, but proceed to pass it into law.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said he had listened to all the excellent speches made on this subject in the hope of being able to form some clear idea of what the Bill actually proposed to do. Although no one would object to anything in the sentiments which had been expressed, he thought there had been a great want of lucidity in the explanations of the Bill as it stood. Almost every hon. Member who had spoken in its favour had given reasons for a Bill, but in each case he had said he would not be satisfied with the provisions of this particular Bill to carry out the desirable objects. He would willingly have many of the improvements eloquently referred to by the Lord-Advocate carried into effect, but he could not see how the right hon. and learned Gentleman's sentiments tallied with the provisions of the Bill. He had, however, on this as on previous occasions had the courage of his convictions. On the part of the Government he had admitted that if the Bill got into Committee, the pressure of the Government would be brought to bear to exclude Clause 7 of the Bill.

MR. THOMAS SHAW: I said I hoped to make it applicable.

MR. COCHRANE said that no doubt in appearance the Bill would be the same, but the spirit and the vitality would be for ever departed. The main object of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, it might be, was to get at the man to whom the land, which had increased in value through no effort of his own, belonged. But he ventured to say that if the clause were dealt with in the manner adumbrated by the Lord-Advocate, that object would fall to the ground, and they would merely increase the burden on the shoulders of those who now bore it. All that the honourable mover would succeed in doing would be to secure that where the cloak had been taken, the coat should be taken also. It could not be seriously contended that this Bill was based upon the Minority Report of the Commission. In almost every important point the Report differed. The Minority Commissioners were of opinion that the rating of vacant land should be accompanied by a liberal and far-sighted policy in the direction of acquiring parks and gardens for public use. That was extremely desirable, but it did not appear among the provisions of the Bill. There were other safeguards advocated by the Minority Commissioners which did not find a place in the Bill. The honourable mover and the honourable seconder had made speeches which were not exactly, as he thought, upon this particular measure. The honourable seconder gave expression to many admirable sentiments, and hoped that if this Bill were passed into law the result would be that where a man now paid £16 a year rent he would only have to pay £8. There was a platform ring, he thought, about those sentiments that was an echo of the recent general election. The hon. Member for Preston had effectively exposed the character of the measure. He did not approach with a natural predilection any speech delivered by an hon. Member holding views in entire opposition to the views he himself held, but he had listened with interest to the hon. Member's clear and unanswerable arguments in regard to the disastrous effect the Bill would have in making houses and land far dearer instead of cheaper. The hon. Member had also described the Bill as a perverted form of Protection. It certainly did seem strange that supporters of the Government should say that to put a tax on ground rents would cheapen house rent, whereas if they put a tax on wheat it would raise the price of bread. It seemed to him that if they put a tax upon ground rents the ultimate result would be to increase house rent. That had been the effect in every country that had tried it. In his view the prime elements of cheapness were private initiative. This Bill would not encourage that. It would not give capital that security which it required. He had hoped the Lord Advocate would explain the Bill, but if the right hon. Gentleman would allow him, he would ask him to clear up one or two points of difficulty. In the first place the title of the Bill was somewhat misleading. It was said to be a Bill—

> "To provide for the taxation for local purposes of land values in Scotland, and for the compulsory acquisition of land by local authorities in Scotland."

Nothing, however, appeared in the provisions of the Bill dealing with the acquisition of land. That was extremely, almost grossly, misleading. Was it the intention of the promoters to attract unwary flies to their net by this title? [Cries of "No."] It seemed rather strange, at any rate, that it should not have been explained.

MR. SUTHERLAND: If the hon. Gentleman had been present at the opening of the proceedings on this Bill, he would have heard my explanation on this particular point.

MR. COCHRANE hoped he had not done the hon. Gentleman any injustice. The explanation must have been very early in the proceedings, for he came in almost at the opening. He agreed, however, with an hon. Member on the Ministerial side who, in April, 1904, wrote to the *Daily News* that in his opinion it was equitable that if unoccupied land was rated in the belief that its owner had a good thing, the owner should be given the right to demand that the community should take up the good thing and its accruing unearned increment. Supposing that they did put extra taxes on land on that account, the landlord surely ought to be able to say to them, "You consider this land worth a largely increased sum of money; if so, then take it over yourself; you are welcome to it." There was a difficulty in Clause 1. How on earth the provisions of that clause were going to be carried out he did not know. The proprietor, or reputed proprietor, had got to estimate the annual value as between a willing seller and a willing buyer. How was a working man to take on the somewhat difficult task of measuring the ground and estimating its value? If the proprietor did not succeed in doing this he was liable to imprisonment. In large centres in Scotland there was what was known as the tenement or flat system, and in each case the tenement or flat was owned by the vassal himself. How was it conceivable that under this measure each owner of a flat or part of a flat would be able to assess the proportion of the ground upon which his tenement was built, and hand it in to the proper authority? That was perfectly ridiculous, impractical, and impossible, and that provision alone was sufficient to condemn the measure. Was it possible for a working man to value accurately the ground upon which a house was to be built? There were whole streets of these tenement houses in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and the owner of each flat would be called upon to make this ridiculous and absurd assessment. It had been said that this Bill emanated very largely from Glasgow. The hon. Member for Glasgow had given to the House some of the reasons why the Town Council of Glasgow supported this measure, and one reason was that if they did not do so they would probably lose their seats. But even under those circumstances the Bill did not meet with very much support in Glasgow. The idea seemed to be that some one had to be taxed and a victim had to be found, without any reasons being given why that particular individual should be the owners of ground values. It was almost the invariable rule in Scotland for builders to acquire land on a fee-simple or absolute title. The difference between the Scottish and the English cases was that whereas the feu was a perpetual charge, in England the lease came to an end, and the landlord might perhaps get some advantage from the increased value as far as the improvements were concerned. The Scottish landowner had none of those advantages, for he sold his land at a perpetual interest, and whether the land was improved or not he was unable at any period to get a higher interest than that for which he had contracted, and that made a very great difference. He had no reversionary right, and he had no vote. Would hon. Gentlemen insist upon taxation without representation? He supposed that this Bill was one of those efforts at "cleaning the slate," of which they had heard so much. Undoubtedly the hardship of this Bill would fall upon the small investor. Feus had always been a favourite form of investment amongst the working classes of Scotland. All the benefit and friendly societies had invested their small savings in the purchase of feu-duties. He did not quite understand whether Clause 7 of this Bill was to stand or not.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said he thought he had made that point quite clear. Clause 7 was an excellent clause if applied prospectively, but he proposed at a subsequent stage to put at the beginning of the clause a proviso making it absolutely clear that the clause had no retrospective effect.

MR. COCHRANE said what the right hon. Gentleman had promised was to meet the point raised by the Royal Commission in order that existing contracts should not be interfered with, because to do that would be a very grave and indefensible action. The right hon. Gentleman endorsed the view of the Royal Commission on this point, and he understood that he would admit of no compromise upon that.

Mr. SUTHERLAND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put the Question.

MR. COCHRANE, continuing, said he thought it was hard that hon. Members opposite should attempt to interfere with the principle of free discussion, because, after all, they were now dealing with a great matter of principle. The object of this Bill was to levy taxation upon capital, and he hoped the House would listen to what he had to say. How would this Bill affect charitable institutions? It was a common joke with Englishmen that Scotchmen were supposed to be extremely near, and therefore anything which affected the power and influence of those institutions affected Scotchmen in a marked degree. This Bill would affect seriously the Merchant Company of Edinburgh and the institutions connected with it, for they had money invested in feu-duties amounting to £16,000. This money belonged mostly to charitable and educational endowments and funds for the widows of members. If this Bill were passed, at thirty years purchase the income of this institution would be diminished by one-tenth, or a capital sum of £48,000. These institutions denied that they held up their land, for they were at all times willing to feu at the market value at the prices obtainable by auction. One of the chief attractions of Edinburgh was its open spaces. If they went along Prince's Street they would see the numerous open spaces of which Scottish Members were so proud. If they were to pass any measure which would crowd over those open spaces with bricks and mortar it would be a national disaster. This Bill would discourage the laying out of garden cities and open spaces. The feeding of children, fresh air, and healthy playgrounds were as great a necessity as good houses. How on earth his hon. friend who moved this Bill made out that it was going to improve the housing of the working classes by increasing the cost of the ground he could not for the life of him see. He would give an instance of one of those magnates who were supposed to make these bloated sums out of feuing land. There was an estate of 700 acres within the city, of which 386 acres were feued, and 34 acres open spaces and parks. The cost of development was £204,000, out of which £112,000 had been recovered, leaving £92,000 outstanding, only part of which was recoverable. In addition to ground which was given for a railway and numerous open spaces, twenty miles of roads and sewers were made. He ventured to say that in this case the public had benefited as much the owner. Such a large capital outlay as this was only possible where the State secured to the proprietor that the contract he had entered into should be faithfully and duly observed. He opposed this Bill on several other grounds. He agreed with the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, which stated that there had been a great deal of misconception and exaggeration prevalent on this subject. These proposals would weaken security and tend to congest areas and would not facilitate the purchase of open spaces and gardens. The supposed direct taxation of feu-duties would violate the law of contract and involve injustice without securing any public benefit. It would not benefit the ratepayers or the working classes, and only the present owners of houses would be benefited, because future purchasers would have no share in the benefit. It would injure numerous charitable institutions and private investments, and the principal sufferers would be the frugal, the provident, the industrious, and the poor. It would involve a reversal of the uniform practice of Parliament, and it would be a violation of the well-established canons of political economy. Although he believed the Bill had been considerably weakened by the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, nevertheless he should vote against it.

Mr. SUTHERLAND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: — Ayes, 328; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 24.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E)
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork. S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst. W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs. Leigh)
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Clynes, J. R.
Coats,Sir T.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.

Cross, Alexander
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles R. (Galway)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert,John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, R. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'sssh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred

Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh,Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow,W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)

O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (RoscommonN
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Rt.Hn.E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott(Bradf'd
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (HawickB.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowdon, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.

Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thorne, William
Torrance, A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah, C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath,North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J, H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson,A.(Elgin andNairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse,Lord (Norfolk,Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse,Sir JT(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Trevelyan.

NOES

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn.Michael HughHicks
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett. A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'd
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir JohnH.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col,CharlesW.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rothschild, Hon.Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel,H.(Hertford, East)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,Rt.Hon.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES —Sir William Bull and Sir Henry Craik.

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'Now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 333; Noes, 63. (Division List No. 25.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Bolton, T. D. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James(Aberdeen)
Bryce, J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew,W)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis, J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.PancrasW,
Condon, Thomas Joseph

Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. S. J.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness)
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn's-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Sir Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
Maddison, Frederick
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. B.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thamptn)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm't
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John

Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool, Walton)
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thorne, William
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W.Dudley(Southamptn
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.(Elgin andNairn
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras. S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse,Lord (Norfolk,Mid
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Woodhouse, SirJT.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn.Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Bertram, Julius
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H.A.E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland, SirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey,F.W.F.(Bury S. Edm's
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir JohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn.Col.W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,SirHenrySeymour (Hull)
Lambton, Hon. FrederickWm.
Liddell, Henry
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Dublin,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E.C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Nield, Herbert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Harold Cox and Sir Henry Craik.

Main Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided: —Ayes, 319; Noes, 61. (Division List No. 26.)

AYES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N.E.)
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen,A Acland (Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert(Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Bolton, T.D.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce,Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen
Bryce,J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas

Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Cleland, J. W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cogan, Denis J.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St, Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dillon, John
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunne, Major E. M. (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grove, Archibald
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, R. L (Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Hare, Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Charles Mark
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton(
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'h
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robertson, Sir G Scott (Bradf'rd
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)

Schwann, Chas. E (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thorne, William
Torrance, A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Wallace, Robert
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Woodhouse, Lord (Norfolk, Mid)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis,

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bertram, Julius
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon, Sir Daniel
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, Col. H. B.
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'd
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull
Liddell, Henry
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Nield, Herbert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Williamson, G. H. (Worcester)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Harold Cox and Sir Henry Craik.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c."—(*Mr. Sutherland*)—Debate arising.

And, it being after half-past Five of the Clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 117.]

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3, adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at nineteen minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 26th March, 1906.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Essex and Suffolk Equitable Insurance Society Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Glamorgan and South Wales Water Bill [H.L.]. Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Kent Electric Power Bill [H.L.] Read. 2a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Vauclain's Patent Bill [H.L.]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [H.L.]. Read 3a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Hull Joint Dock Bill [H.L.]. Read 3a. An amendment made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Belhaven and Stenton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated March 19th, 1906, providing for the distribution of the general aid grant.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3538. Russia (Trade and agriculture, Poland and Lithuania).

No. 3539. United States.

No. 3540. Brazil (Trade for the year 1904).

CEYLON.

Correspondence relating to elementary education in Ceylon.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Forty-eighth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

TURKEY, No. 1 (1906).

Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-eastern Europe. (In continuation of "Turkey, No. 3. (1905).")

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated March 19th, 1906, declaring Changsha to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Moved, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 19th day of June next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Thursday the 3rd day of May next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 19th day of June next. That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended. That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill later than Thursday the 3rd day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice after Tuesday, the 8th day of May next. That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Tuesday the 8th day of May next."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, in accordance with what I said to your Lordships three or four days ago with reference to strengthening the Committee of Selection, I now move that the Lords named on the Paper be added to the Committee.

Moved, That the Lords following b added to the Committee, viz.—

M. Ripon. (*Lord Privy Seal.*)
D. Bedford.
D. Northumberland.
M. Lansdowne.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Rosse.
E. Camperdown.
L. Balfour.
L. Brougham an Vaux.
L. Newton.

—(*The Earl of Onslow*

On Question, Motion agreed to.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRAD MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATEN AGENTS) BILL [H.L].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, th Act of 1888, which my Bill seeks t amend, was passed in consequence of th Report of a Departmental Committe appointed by the Board of Trade, whic recommended that a register should b instituted of patent agents, and that th Board of Trade should have the powe to erase the names of those who wer proved by a committee appointed b them to have been guilty of disgracefu professional conduct. The Act provide that no person should practice as patent agent, or, rather, that no perso should use the words "patent agent," unless he was registered as such; and th result of that was that a number of persons, some of whom had been actuall struck off the register for disgracefu professional conduct, continued to practice as before by the mere substitution of titles like "patent expert" and "inventors' agent," and the object of the Act, which was to protect inventors was largely frustrated. In consequence a Bill—practically my Bill—was introduced into the House of Commons in 1894, and it there passed its Second Reading and was referred to a Select Committee. The Select Committee passed unanimously the clause which is the substantive clause in my Bill and then the general election came and the Bill, like many others, went into limbo and was not heard of again.

Last year I introduced the Bill into your Lordships' House, and it was read a second time. It proceeded no further owing to certain objections being taken to it in detail, but those objections I have largely met by adding this year a clause providing that all existing interests shall be preserved, which I think is quite fair and right. I now ask the House to give the Bill a Second Reading, as it did last year, and if there are any objections to it they can be dealt with in Committee. The principle of the Bill has been affirmed by both Houses of Parliament, and the measure meets a want largely felt by the profession.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Coleridge.*)

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, I have to say, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that they have no objection to the Second Reading of this Bill. His Majesty's Government, however, reserve to themselves the right of moving any Amendments which they may think desirable when the Bill reaches the Committee stage.

On Question, Bill read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, there has been some little misunderstanding in this important Bill's being put down for Second Reading without adequate notice. I propose, therefore, to postpone the Second Reading until to-morrow. I think that will meet the convenience of those of your Lordships who take an interest in this question.

Order for Second Reading postponed till to-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 26th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Crystal Palace Company Bill [Lords]; Kidderminster Gas Bill [Lords]; Milford Docks Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.; Romford and District Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH.

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for additional Provision in the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.: London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Metropolitan Water Board Bill.

Ordered, That the Reports be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]; Wandsworth and Putney Gas (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. Read a second time; and ordered to be considered upon Wednesday.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Petition of the Mining Association of Great Britain, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Prestwich; and Swinford; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Accrington; Ashby Parva; Ashwell Thorpe; Ardwincle; Bath; Blymhill; Bolton; Castor; Catterick; Cheriton; Clifton (two); Cound; Crundale (two); Dibden (two); Elton; Elton and Longnewton; Frolesworth; Grinshill; Haltwhistle; Hesketh with Becconsall (two); Hollinwood; Kirkley; Leicester; Little Tew; Llanbalock; Leversal; Lower Hardres (two); Nenthead; Newton le Willows; North Brisley; Quidenham; Rockingham; Roggiett; Ruckinge; St. Dunstan's, Canterbury (two); St. Giles, Oxford; St. Leonard (Bucks); St. Leonard with Buckland Common; St. Peter and St. Paul (Lancashire); Salford; Shotton; Slapton (two); Stradbroke (two); Streatham; Sutton cum Upton; Tivetshall St. Mary with St. Margaret (two); Upper Clapton; Wadworth; Whitechapel; Winestead (two); and, Yealand Conyers; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Petition of the Gamekeepers' Association of the United Kingdom, for the inclusion of gamekeepers; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS)

Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 19th March, 1906, providing for the distribution of the General Aid Grant [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the Areas, Population, and Valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Fifty-third Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

VAGRANCY (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Minutes of Evidence taken by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, Volumes II. and III. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHTHOUSES, ETC. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).

Copies presented, of Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights of their Inspection of Local Lighthouses, Buoys, and Beacons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 92.]

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Copy presented, of Annual Reports of Proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, &c. for the year 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TURKEY (No. 1), 1906.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence respecting the affairs of South Eastern Europe [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3538 to 3540 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CEYLON.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Elementary Education in Ceylon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (RELIGIOUS CREED OF PRISONERS).

Address for "Return showing the declared religious Creeds and Demoninations of the prisoners in each of His Majesty's prisons in England, Wales, and Scotland, on the 28th day of March 1906."—(*Mr. Hay Morgan.*)

COOLIE LABOUR.

Address for "Return showing (a) the names of the various Colonies or British Possessions in which indentured Coolie Labour is employed, and upon what work, distinguishing the class of Coolie, namely, nationality or tribe; (b) the number of such Coolies respectively; (c) the conditions under which the Coolies are housed or live, whether in fenced or enclosed areas or compounds, or otherwise, and how, stating also whether any and what restrictions are placed upon their individual liberty at times other than when engaged upon their ordinary daily labour; (d) what, if any, regulations exist and are in practice for the punishment of such Coolies respectively for desertion or misconduct, stating the nature of the offence and punishment, and if such regulations and practice have had the sanction of the Government or governing authority of the Colony or Possessions."—*Mr. Nield.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Admiralty Cruiser Programme.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the stipulation of the Secretary to the Treasury that the Admiralty should take the earliest opportunity of informing Parliament of the change in the cruiser programme of 1904–5, Parliament was similarly informed of the change in the cruiser programme of 1905–6.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The change in the cruiser programme for 1904–5 was made public in the Explanatory Statement presented to Parliament with the Estimates for the following year. A similar course was adopted this year as being that most desirable in the interests of the public service.

Aberdeen Railway Station.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawn to the present condition of the Aberdeen railway station, part of which structure is in a state of complete decay and dilapidation; and, having regard to the recent accident at Charing Cross station, if he will cause inquiries to be made from officials on the spot in order to insure the protection of the public from a similar danger; can he also state what steps, if any, are being taken by the railway companies concerned, the Caledonian and Great North of Scotland, to complete the works sanctioned by The Aberdeen Joint Passenger Station Act, 1899, the powers of which expire in August, 1907; and can he see his way to enforce the carrying out of the works then sanctioned, in view of the necessity for increased station accommodation in Aberdeen, and the danger and inconvenience involved by the existing state of affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am aware that there is long-standing and general dissatisfaction with the condition of this station, and I have invited the observations of the railway companies concerned upon my hon. friend's Question.

In their reply the companies state that the condition of the existing structure is not such as to involve danger to the public. As regards alterations, they point out that the widening of the railway between Ferryhill Junction and the station, and other portions of the works authorised by the Act of 1899, have now been completed. They add that the enlargement of the station, which could not be undertaken pending the completion of those portions of the works, is now under consideration, and that so soon as the plans have been adjusted the work will be proceeded with. After a reasonable interval I propose to inquire what progress has been made, and shall hope to be able to give a satisfactory Answer to a further Question, should my hon. friend find it desirable to put one at a later date.

Argentine Railway Locomotive Orders.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official information to the effect that one Argentine railway company, whose shareholders are British and whose board of directors reside in England, recently placed an order for thirty locomotives with German manufacturers; whether he can ascertain the respective prices of the English and German manufacturers; whether there is in the possession of his Department, or that of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a Report from a certain British Consul, stating that the German Government are giving a bounty to German locomotive builders to enable them to successfully compete with English locomotive builders; and whether he will lay the said Consular Report upon the Table; whether he can give any explanation as to the contradictory Report recently received from Berlin to that given by the said British Consul; and whether he will endeavour to ascertain the true facts, and lay them upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I have no official information as to the purchases of locomotives by particular Argentine Railway Companies or the prices at which they are purchased. With regard to the reported German bounty on locomotives I can add nothing to my previous Answer † until the completion of the inquiries now being made.

S. S. "Saint Dunstan."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether the s.s. "Saint Dunstan" signed on a crew at Hamburg during the present month; whether he can state how many of the sailors and firemen were Britishers, and how many were foreigners, and the wages per month paid to the sailors and firemen.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I have at present no information, either at the offices of the Board of Trade or with the Registrar-General of Seamen, with regard to any articles that may have been recently signed in the case to which the hon. Member alludes, but inquiries are being made; and, if the hon. Member will put his Question down again, I hope to be in a position to give him an Answer.

Office of Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in the office of the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen with the remuneration of the staff; and whether, seeing that a Committee of Inquiry was promised some considerable time ago, he will make inquiries into the matter and appoint a Committee at an early date to investigate their alleged grievances.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am aware that more than one petition has been sent in to the Board of Trade by clerks in the office of the Registrar-General of Shipping and Seamen, with regard to their pay and prospects. No promise of a Committee of Inquiry has been made, but the matter has received, and is receiving, consideration.

Sick Seamen's Transport.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Finance Department of the Board of Trade is deducting from the wages of seamen who are left in hospital abroad the cost of their hospital expenses and passage home; whether he can state under what regulations or section of the Merchant Shipping Act Board of Trade officials are empowered to make such deductions from the wages of sick seamen; and whether he will give instructions for this practice to be discontinued.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 350-1.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The expenses referred to by the hon. Member are deducted from the wages of seamen who are left behind on account of unfitness or inability to proceed on the voyage, under Section 189 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. The expenses are not, however, deducted if the cause of leaving behind is hurt or injury in the service of the ship within the provisions of Section 207. The practice is in accord with the provision of Section 189 of the Act of 1894.

S. S. "Iquique"—Case of Joseph Rey.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the case of a steward, named Joseph Rey, a native of Mauritius, who joined the sailing ship "Iquique" at Newcastle, New South Wales, on April 23rd, 1905, and was discharged at Valparaiso on December 30th, 1905, in consequence of injuries received in his stomach whilst in the service of his ship; whether he is aware that this man was sent from Valparaiso to Liverpool, and that the Board of Trade Officials at Liverpool deducted from Rey's wages the sum of £6 to cover the cost of his hospital expenses and passage home; and whether, seeing that the Merchant Shipping Act provides that such expenses shall be borne by the owner of the ship, he will cause inquiry to be made into this case, and direct that the £6 shall be paid over to Rey at once, seeing that he is now destitute in London.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The information in possession of the Board of Trade is to the effect that Rey was not injured in the service of the ship. As, however, the hon. Member states that he was so injured, I will make further inquiries into the matter.

Seamen's Records.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state why the Board of Trade have failed to keep at the General Registry and Record Office of Shipping and Seamen a register of all seamen, as required by Section 252 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894; whether he is aware that, in consequence of no such register being kept of the engagement and discharge of men employed on British ships, seamen are unable to obtain a true record of their past services on British ships; and whether, seeing that the cost of maintaining such a register of all seamen would not exceed £2,000 per annum, he will have the matter inquired into with a view to the establishment of such register.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Registrar-General of Seamen that he does actually keep at his office a register of all seamen, as required by Section 252 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894. It is possible that this register is not kept in the manner desired by the hon. Member, but two Committees have reported that the advantages to be gained by the establishment of a central indexed register would not justify its cost. The cost of starting such a register would be over £5,000, and it would take at least £1,800 a year to maintain.

Irish Land Act Administration.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the pink schedules, Form 39, on the files in rent-fixing cases commonly show that the landlord has not made any improvement, that improvements have been made, and that the rent has been fixed on the gross value, including the improvements, on the ground that although the court valuer has ascertained and reported the improvements the tenant has not claimed them by schedule in court; and whether His Majesty's Government will enforce the law requiring all improvements to be deemed the tenant's until the contrary has been shown, and exempting the tenant's improvement from rent.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that the pink schedules referred to do not commonly show the result which is stated in the first part of the Question. The Commissioners fix fair rents in accordance with the provisions of the Land Law Acts, and the procedure is regulated by statutory rules. As to the concluding part of the Question, I am afraid that I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member on Wednesday last.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he arrange that in all Reports and Returns of transactions under the Land Act of 1903, when the land dealt with is untenanted, the Poor Law valuation shall be shown in lieu of yearly rent.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission inform me that untenanted land is, as a rule, purchased by the Estates Commissioners for division into parcels and distribution amongst the classes of persons referred to in Section 2 (1) of the Act of 1903. The tenement valuation is not always ascertainable even for the untenanted land so purchased as a whole, and when such land is divided into parcels it becomes necessary to have a revision of the tenement valuation to suit each parcel sold. This revision is not completed until after the untenanted land has been divided. It would not, therefore, be possible to show in the Returns the valuation in respect of the resales of such land in parcels.

Irish Inland Fisheries.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now prepared to take practical steps to remove the obstacles which at present prevent the inspectors from holding inquiries on the subject of inland fisheries in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I think that some legislation on this subject is desirable, but I cannot at present say whether it may be possible to introduce such legislation this year.

Gerahies Boatslip.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether application has been made to the Congested Districts Board for a boatslip at Gerahies, Bantry, county Cork; and whether, in view of the fact that the fishermen in that district are hampered for want of accommodation to land their fish, he will have a slip provided for them.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) An application to the effect stated was received from the Bantry rural district council, and on the 16th October last the Congested Districts Board informed the district council that, if the Cork County Council should undertake the construction of a suitable landing place at Gerahies, the Board would consider what contribution they could make towards the work. No further communication has been received from the district council.

Kilfinane Schools.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say what is the number of children for whom, according to the standard of the Commissioners of national education in Ireland, accommodation exists in the female and infant schools at Kilfinane, county Limerick; what has been the number on the rolls and in average attendance for the last two quarters; is he aware that classes have been held during the winter months in sheds in the school yard; and that the manager has made an application to the Commissioners for a building grant for the erection of a boys' school so as to relieve the congestion; will he say what answer has been given by the Commissioners to this application; how long has the correspondence between the manager and the Commissioners on this matter been going on; and can he suggest any means by which a building grant for these schools may be obtained without further delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that the Kilfinane convent national school for female and infant pupils affords accommodation for 197 pupils, according to the Commissioners' requirements as to space. The number on the rolls on the 31st December, 1905, was 330, and the average attendances for the quarters ending 30th September and 31st December, 1905, were 284 and 283, respectively. The Commissioners are aware that classes have been held in sheds in the school yard on account of the insufficient space afforded by the school room. On the 14th August, 1905, the manager applied for a grant towards building a school house for boys, so that the present boys' school might be utilised to relieve the congestion in the convent school. On the 14th October, 1905, the manager was informed that as the existing funds for building grants were already hypothecated, his application could not be considered for the present. The need for additional accommodation was brought to the Commissioners' notice by the manager on the 9th September, 1904, and the Commissioners, having obtained and considered special Reports from their inspector, issued to the manager on the 16th December, 1904, the necessary forms on which to make application for a building grant. These forms were never returned by him. The question of the revision of plans for building school houses is under the consideration of the Irish Government and the Treasury, and will be decided with as little delay as possible.

Magheradown Estate, Cavan.

Mr. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether on the Magheradown estate, county Cavan, the Estates Commissioners have sanctioned the advances, and have vested the holdings in the tenants; and, if so, were the conditions as arranged by Captain Starkey, the vendor, carried out of reinstating the evicted tenants; and, if they have not been so carried out, will he explain why this has not been done.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for the sale of this estate have yet been instituted before them.

Labourers' Cottages in the Newcastle Union.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Newcastle West District Council are promoting an improvement scheme under the Labourers Acts, and that only forty cottages can be built under it before the 1s. in the pound limit is expended, that thirty-two farmers whose names they are including therein have given consent to the district council to acquire the plots, and that the district councillors guarantee that eight more will give it; and whether, under these circumstances, he will say what is the quickest way to forward the scheme and the best way to reduce the expense of inquiries, and law and clerical business in connection with it, which in former schemes cost from £30 to £40 per cottage, or one-third of the amount paid for cottage and plot.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board are aware that the Newcastle Rural District Council have under consideration a new improvement scheme under the Labourers Acts. The clerk of the council estimated that forty cottages with acre allotments, and forty additional half-acres for existing cottages could be provided within the rating limit. Consents appear to have been received from thirty-two occupiers in the case of the forty proposed cottages, and seventeen occupiers in the case of the forty additional half-acres, but unless the consent of the owners should also be obtained it will be necessary for the council to seek compulsory powers of acquiring the lands. If the consent of all parties can be obtained, the council can make what is known as a scheme by agreement, in which case the Board would be disposed to dispense with the usual advertisements, but the scheme must be inquired into, and a formal Provisional Order be made. By proceeding in this way the council would save the expense of advertising the scheme and of serving preliminary notices and copies of the Provisional Order on owners and occupiers; and, if all parties were agreed, the cost of the inquiry would also be largely reduced, as the council would only have to prove the necessity for the additional accommodation, while the cost of arbitration proceedings would be saved altogether.

Commitments for Contempt of Court.

MR. McHUGH (Sligo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to proceedings in the Land Judge's Court in Dublin, on 9th March, when attachments had been issued against Thomas J. Smith, J.P., Joseph Mulligan, and Terence Fitzpatrick; whether he is aware that the three defendants named were charged with a criminal offence, and pleaded not guilty, and demanded, through their counsel, a trial in accordance with constitutional usage; and whether, seeing that there is no appeal from the order made sentencing the defendants to unlimited terms of imprisonment, and that under that order they may be kept in prison for life unless they plead guilty of a charge which they deny having committed, he proposes to introduce legislation to deal with the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I answered this Question on Tuesday last, when, in the hon. Member's absence, it was put on his behalf by the hon. Member for East Mayo.†

Fair Rent Disabilities.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that tenants, or their successors in title, who sub-let before 1881, and who own less than seven-eighths of their holdings, are not permitted to enter the Land Courts to have fair rents fixed; and, if so, what steps the Government propose to take with the object of removing this disability.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am advised that the statement of the law in the Question is quite correct. The policy of the Irish Land Acts has always hitherto been to confine the privilege of having fair rents fixed to occupying tenants, and to exclude middlemen from these provisions. Any alteration in the law, such as the hon. Member suggests, would involve a complete change in this policy.

Land Commission Annuitants.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the average number of Land Commission annuitants sued twice yearly for their annuities; and whether he would issue instructions that proceedings be only taken once a year, with a view to avoiding legal costs by the present double proceedings, or if the necessary legislation to deal with the matter will be introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that it would not be possible to answer the first inquiry without an elaborate investigation, which would occupy a considerable time. Every new purchaser is informed that if the half-yearly instalment of the annuity is not paid within fourteen days he will become liable to immediate proceedings, and that under no circumstances can an extension of time for payment be granted. Prompt payment of the half-yearly instalment is necessary, in order to provide for the payment of the half-yearly dividends on the stock created for the purpose of making advances for land purchase. The Answer to the final inquiry is, therefore, in the negative.

Wexford Oyster Beds.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Wexford oyster beds have become almost exhausted, owing to the fact that they have, within recent years, been over-fished by foreign boats, as well as damaged by trawlers; and whether the Board of Agriculture contemplate taking any steps to have these beds relaid and protected.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction are not aware that any foreign boats have, within recent years, fished for oysters on the Wexford beds. Steam trawling is prohibited for a considerable distance off Wexford harbour, and the Department consider that no material damage is done by sailing trawlers on the grounds where oysters exist in any number. The Department do not consider that relaying oyster beds in the open sea is likely to be attended with success.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 226–7.

Roscrea Evicted Tenant.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Lucas, of Roscrea, who has rented a town park at Glen Albert, from which the tenant was evicted five years ago for non-payment of rent, has been prevented from grazing his cattle upon the land by the action of the former tenant; and whether steps will be taken to prevent such interference in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that neither the landlord nor the tenant has made any complaint to the police as to the occurrence alleged in the Question, and that the local police have not witnessed any such ocurrence.

Roscrea Castle.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations are in progress for the purchase from the War Office of the castle at Roscrea, King's County, for use as a bacon factory, and that this building dates from the time of King John, and possesses features of historical interest; whether he is aware that, owing to the imperfect drainage of Roscrea, the establishment of a bacon factory in the centre of the town would be likely to give rise to a dangerous nuisance; and whether, on antiquarian and sanitary grounds, he will take steps to prevent this project being carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that there are two ancient castles at Roscrea, one founded in 1213 by King John, and the other in 1281 by Edmund Butler, afterwards Earl of Carrick. The Question appears to refer to the latter castle, which is now the property of the War Department and is in good preservation. I am informed by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War that certain persons interested in the establishment of a bacon factory at Roscrea have approached the War Office with a view to the purchase of a portion of the premises, and it has been decided to put the premises, exclusive of the castle, up for sale by public auction subject to conditions as regards access to and preservation of the castle. It will therefore be seen that there is no danger that the castle itself will be used as a bacon factory, and every care will be taken that the castle shall not suffer. If a bacon factory should be established in Roscrea, any question of sanitation which might possibly arise in connection with it would be a matter for the local authorities to deal with.

Mr. Sampson Beamish's Estate.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Sampson Beamish, Kilmalorda, Timoleague, having entered into an agreement of sale with his tenants, has been unable to obtain the consent of the Estates Commissioners to grant him the benefit of the bonus in case a tenant named Buttimar was excluded from the area of sale; and, if so, will steps be taken to induce the Estates Commissioners to omit this farm, without prejudice to the interests of the selling landlord.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that Mr. Beamish has lodged with them an originating application instituting proceedings for the sale of certain townlands in the County Cork. As Mr. Beamish owns other tenanted townlands in the immediate neighbourhood, which he does not at present propose to sell, because he has not come to terms with the tenants, the Commissioners, in the exercise of the discretion conferred on them by Section 98 (1) of the Irish Land Act, 1903, have written to his solicitors stating that they are unable to see their way to declare the lands at present proposed to be sold to be an estate for the purposes of the Act, to the exclusion of the lands which the tenants have not yet agreed to purchase.

Surgeon-General Roe's Estate.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many acres of untenanted land are owned by Surgeon-General Roe in the parish of Bourney, Roscrea, County Tipperary, and also how many in the adjoining parish of Clonmore or Killavinoge; and will he recommend to the Estates Commissioners the desirability of approaching the landlord with a view to acquiring this untenanted land for distribution amongst the people.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners have received no application in respect of the estate mentioned, and they have no knowledge of the circumstances or extent of the estate. They will make inquiry into the matter if an application should be made to them.

Police Protection of Denis Connolly.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the need for continuing police protection to Denis Connolly, of Borrisnoe, parish of Bourney, County Tipperary, in view of the peaceable condition of this district; is this man constantly attended by two policemen; and will he state the circumstances under which protection was given to him in the first instance.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The police authorities inform me that it is the fact that this district is now in a peaceable condition, but that it is still considered necessary to give constant police protection in the case referred to. I understand that some local feeling still exists against Connolly, owing to proceedings in which he gave evidence some years ago.

Tipperary Police Barracks.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the distance which separates the three police barracks of Gurtderrybeg, Clonnakenny, and Timoney, in the barony of Ikerrin, Roscrea district, County Tipperary; whether he is aware that the two first of these are in one parish, and less than three miles apart; and can he state what reason exists for the continuance of Gurtderrybeg barrack, seeing that it is intermediate between the other two; and, furthermore, seeing that these barracks are situated in the midst of extensive grazing lands, is it as a protection to the people who take these lands on the eleven months' system, or otherwise, that this force of police is kept in such close proximity.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the police authorities that each of the three police stations named is distant at least four miles from the nearer of the other two stations. Two of these stations are situated in the same parish, but the districts attached to them extend into six other parishes. The extent of country to be policed from the three stations is nearly fifty square miles, and each of the stations is considered necessary. It is the fact that these stations are situated in a grazing district, but they were established before any difficulty in connection with the grazing system arose, and are not specially retained for the protection of grazing tenants.

Irish Sub-Commission—Mr Croasdaile.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Croasdaile, before being appointed Sub-Commissioner, failed to succeed as a farmer, and after repeatedly changing his system of farming for some years, ultimately let his land on the eleven months' system; and whether he can say when Mr. Croasdaile's term of appointment expires, and if it is proposed to continue his services as Sub-Commissioner.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Land Commission inform me that they have given Mr. Croasdaile an opportunity of replying to the suggestions made in the first part of this Question. Mr. Croasdaile states that it is not a fact that before being appointed an Assistant Commissioner he failed to succeed as a farmer; that the only change which he made in his system of farming resulted from an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia, which prevented him from offering his cattle for sale; and that he did not let his lands for grazing until after he had been appointed an Assistant Commissioner. Mr. Croasdaile's present term of appointment will expire on the 31st instant. I cannot at present make any statement as to how many and which of the existing temporary Assistant Commissioners will be re-appointed.

Black Mountain, Galway.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the application made to the Estates Commissioners by James Flynn and Patrick Mullin, of Lisheenvalley, for a division of the Black Mountain, now given over to Mrs. Lopdell, he will explain why the lands are let at 1s. an acre to Mrs. Lopdell, seeing that Flynn, Mullin, and others made an offer to the Commissioners for these lands, subject to an annuity of 4s. per acre, and on the understanding that they would build houses and reside thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they received no applications from the persons named, or others, for the land which is being sold to Mrs. Lopdell. This land, as I have already explained, was unsuitable for the enlargement of small holdings.

Donegal Assize Grand Jury Panel.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why no Nationalists or Catholics were summoned on the grand jury for the County of Donegal for the last spring assizes; and whether he will state the respective percentage of Catholics and Protestants in that country; and will he take steps to have this state of affairs remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Grand juries are empanneled by high sheriffs under the provisions of the Grand Jury Acts. I am informed by the high sheriff of County Donegal that the grand jury at the recent assizes was empanneled in the usual way, and that one Catholic was summoned, but did not attend. According to the census of 1901, the percentage of Roman Catholics in the county was 77·73, and of Protestants, 21·84. The high sheriff, however, informs me that though Catholics generally are in a great majority in the county, thos who are qualified by Statute for the grand jury form a very small minority. It is not alleged that the provisions of the law have not been observed, and the Government have, therefore, no power to interfere in the matter.

Irish Education—Text Books.

Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if in the forthcoming revision of the syllabus for Irish national schools the Board of National Education will avoid making any change in the arithmetical courses for the standards, as when change are made so frequently, owing to the losses involved, publishers decline to revise their text books, to the detriment of educational facilities.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they have already revised their syllabuses for the school year beginning on 1st July next, and that very few changes have been made in the arithmetical courses. In any revisions they may make, the Commissioners are influenced solely by the educational needs of the pupils, and they would welcome a less dependence by teachers upon the use of text books in national schools as a desirable change.

Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any advances have been made by the Estates Commissioners, or whether any applications for advances to trustees have been received by them, under Section 4 of the Land Act of 1903, for the purchase of any parcels of land for the purposes of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; if so, will he give particulars of these advances or applications, and will he define the conditions under which advances are made.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received no application for an advance for the purpose mentioned.

Royal Hibernian Academy Report.

Mr. BUTCHER (Cambridge University): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Report about the Royal Hibernian Academy will be issued; and what is the cause of this prolonged delay in publication.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am informed that, owing to the calls upon the time of some of the members, the Committee has not yet drafted its Report, but I understand that further meetings will be held shortly.

Boys and Firearms.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state approximately the number of men and boys, inhabitants of the United Kingdom, who are being, or have been, instructed in the use of firearms, including those trained in the Royal Navy, Royal Naval Reserve and Naval Volunteers, the Regular Army and Army Reserve, the Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers, Cadet Corps, Rifle Clubs, and Royal Irish Constabulary; and whether he can give any estimate of the number of persons not contained in any of the above categories who have acquired the use of firearms without assistance from the State.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The right hon. Gentleman is doubtless aware than when he was at the War Office there were no statistics available to enable a reply to be given to such a Question. There has been no change in this respect since he left. Part of the Question also appertains to the Admiralty and the Irish Office.

Barracks on Foreign Stations.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that The Military Works Act, 1903, estimated that £500,000 would be realised by the sale of barracks, which was to be applied to works on various foreign stations sanctioned under the Act, he can state what proportion of the £500,000 has been realised; and whether, allowing for depreciation, it is believed that the entire sum will be obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Under present circumstances it is not likely that the credits will reach the anticipated sum. As yet they only amount to a very small sum.

Army Seven-year Enlistments.

Major SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary of State for War how many men were enlisted for seven years or over for service in the regular Army during the year ending June 1st, 1903; and how many of these men left the Army up to the present time, and for what reasons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) During the period stated there were six enlistments for seven years and 2,088 for long service, twelve years. These latter are almost all boys. No information is readily available as to the number of these who have left the service, or of the reasons for their so doing.

Ex-Sergeants and their Uniform.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether non-commissioned officers of the Line attaining the rank of sergeant will be allowed the privilege of retaining their rank and wearing uniform on retirement after ten years service, as at present accorded to sergeants serving their time engagement as instructors of volunteers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This Question has received very careful consideration; but it has not been found possible to make the concession suggested by my hon. friend.

Milk for the Army.

Mr. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that condensed milk is supplied to the home forces as a substitute for new milk, and will he state in what quantities this is permitted; what quantity of new milk is allowed a soldier per day; are the contractors for new milk the direct producers of same, and what is the price paid; and are the married quarters supplied by the barrack contractor, or how.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The supply of milk to soldiers' messes is made under regimental arrangements through the regimental institutes, the soldiers having a direct voice in the management of their own messes. I am not, therefore, cognisant of the details mentioned. The families of soldiers make their own arrangements for the supply of milk. No allowance of milk is made to a soldier except in certain cases for hospital use.

MR. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the tender form for the supply of new milk to the home forces is so arranged, by having other commodities bracketed with it, as to prevent the farmer or dairyman from becoming the direct contractor; and will he say what medical and sanitary supervision is exercised over the milk supplied within barracks in order to prevent typhoid or other infectious diseases from being carried in.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In the rules for the management of regimental institutes it is recommended that milk be purchased direct from the producer, and there is nothing in the specimen form to prevent direct supply. The examination of milk and the inspection of the animals and premises from which it comes by a sanitary officer, selected by the principal medical officer, are expressly provided for in the terms of contract.

Soldiers' and Sailors' False Characters.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain the reasons which make it necessary to proceed by separate legislation in the matter of sailors' and soldiers' false characters, rather than by amendment of the powers, in respect of false statements in connection with the entry into the naval and military forces of the Crown, conferred by the Army Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This Bill is identical with the Bill which was introduced last session. It is intended to provide for the punishment of persons who cannot be dealt with by the Army Act, *e.g.*, (1) a discharged seaman or soldier; (2) a man desirous of becoming a seaman or soldier; (3) a person who gives either of the above a false character or statement. I may add that the chief object of the Bill is to deal with the last class.

Highland Crofting Rentals.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the number of persons in each of the Highland crofting counties whose rentals do not exceed £4.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The facts desired are not at present at my disposition, but I am taking steps to ascertain the figures, and in due course a return will be presented to Parliament.

Petersport Pier Road.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can state the reason for the delay in completing the road leading to the pier at Petersport, for which a grant has been promised by the Congested Districts Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The Congested Districts Board have given grants for £1,800, and for a further sum of £238, which was made on February 13th, 1905, on the distinct understanding that this is the final grant, and is given on the condition that the statutory road authority shall provide for all the remaining cost of completing the access road. The district clerk wrote on the 5th instant that his committee are surprised the Board has taken no step to resume the work. They were informed on the 8th instant that it is not for the Congested Districts Board but for the statutory road authority to construct the road. The grants given by the Board have been on the most liberal scale, and it rests with the road authority to complete the construction.

Royal Naval College, Osborne—Cadet Examination.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many cadets have entered the Royal Naval College at Osborne, up to and including the examination in November, 1905, and how many of these cadets were the sons of persons in straitened circumstances for whom the fees were reduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Of the 588 cadets who have entered the Royal Naval College at Osborne up to and including January, 1906, thirty-three were entered at the reduced rate of £40. The regulations limit the grant of this rate to the sons of naval and military officers and of civil officers under the Board of Admiralty.

Glanders Outbreak at Oxford.

MR. JOHN PHILIPPS (Pembroke): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the outbreak of glanders among the Government Yeomanry remounts at Oxford, and can he say how many horses have been destroyed; whether any of these animals had been known to be in contact with horses brought from South Africa by the late Government; and, if not, how the outbreak of disease is accounted for.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) A serious outbreak of glanders has recently occurred at Wytham, in Berkshire, due to a horse which had been moved there from the Clarendon Hotel at Oxford. The horse was the property of the War Office and was used for Yeomanry purposes, but I am informed that it was never in contact with horses brought from South Africa, and there is no evidence whatever to show that is contracted the disease from other Army horses. Twelve horses have been slaughtered by the local authority, and we are making a thorough inquiry into the case in concert with the Army Veterinary Department. The measures already adopted have, I hope, prevented the further spread of the disease.

Northampton Butchers' Association—Swine Fever Order.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Board has received and considered an application from the Northampton Town and County Master Butchers' Association, praying the Board, in view of the present restrictions on purchase of pigs for use in Northampton from other markets in Northamptonshire and adjoining counties, to so amend the Swine Fever Order as to grant a slaughtering licence available from these outside markets to the licensed slaughter-houses in Northampton; and whether the prayer of this petition will be granted by the Board.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have been in communication with the Northampton Butchers' Association on this matter. The Order requires no amendment to meet the difficulties referred to, which have arisen owing to a misapprehension of its effect. The matter has now been explained to the association and to the local authority, and I do not anticipate any further complaint.

Convictions for Drunkenness.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of persons proceeded against and the number convicted for being drunk last year, and the number of licence holders proceeded against and the number convicted for permitting drunkenness in the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) These particulars are given annually in Table XI. of the Criminal Judicial Statistics, but the statistics for the year 1905 cannot be ready for a considerable time to come. Figures on this subject for the year 1905 will be included in the volume of licensing statistics which is in course of preparation, and will, I hope, be ready for issue before long.

Irish Lighthouse Keepers.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Irish Lights Commissioners are contemplating any further reductions in the number of principal lighthouse keepers in their service; and, if so, is it intended to give any remuneration to the keepers whose duties and responsibilities will be increased by these reductions, and who will not have the same chance of promotion.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that they have not formulated any definite scheme for the reduction of the number of principal lightkeepers in their service, and that they cannot therefore give the information asked for.

Belfast Post Office—Promotions.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, with reference to the three vacancies which were recently created through the promotion of the former holders in the ranks of acting or relieving postmasters on the staff of the Belfast post office, to which persons were appointed who hold the position of eighth, twenty-third, and thirtieth on the local seniority list of the telegraph branch of that office, he will state the respective length of service of each, the mode of selection adopted, and the particular qualification that they possessed which led to their preferment, to the exclusion of their seniors, upon that list; will he also state the average length of service of the first seven on the list; and whether, seeing that a general knowledge of postal as well as telegraph duties is essential to the due performance of the duties of an acting postmaster, he will say where and when did the appointees, in this instance, acquire such knowledge, particularly in respect of the proper treatment of the various accounts of head post offices.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The respective services of the three sorting clerks and telegraphists at Belfast who were recently selected for the duty of taking charge of vacant offices are, Number eight, twenty years and eight months; Number twenty-three, sixteen years and ten months; and Number thirty, fifteen years and ten months. The average length of service of the seven senior men is twenty-nine and a half years. The three officers were selected, because, taking into account the general qualifications of all the eligible officers, they were considered to be the most suitable for the duty.

Appointment to Provincial Postmasterships.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the number of provincial postmasters appointed during the past ten years after announcement of vacancy in Post Office Circular, and without announcement of vacancy in Post Office Circular, together with the rank from which each promoted officer was drawn, the scale of pay of that rank, and the salary he received on promotion.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member the information he desires, for considerable labour would be required to compile such a Return.

Irish Rural Postmen.

Captain DONELAN : To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the desirability of extending the concessions recently granted to rural postmen in Great Britain to rural postmen in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The general concessions granted under the Stanley revision to rural postmen apply to those in Ireland as well as to those elsewhere in the United Kingdom. The rates of pay vary according to the work which has to be performed and the cost of living.

Mr. NANNETTI : To ask the Postmaster-General if it is intended in the new scale to include Irish rural postmen, who are at present on the scale 15s. by 1s. to 18s., in the new scale 16s. by 1s. to 20s., or are they, the Irish rural postmen, to be treated differently from the men employed in similar work in England, Scotland, and Wales.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) A certain number of rural postmen in Ireland are at present on the scale 15s. by 1s. to 18s., to which the hon. Member refers. The question of their pay is one that will, no doubt, come before the Committee on Post Office Servants.

London Postal Superintending Staff.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there does not exist a class of second-class assistant superintendents in the London postal service, although such a class exists for supervising purposes in the central telegraph office and in the large provincial offices; whether any memorial upon this question has been received from the London staff; and whether he contemplates taking any steps to place the London postal superintending staff upon the same footing as the provincial staffs and the London telegraph staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) A memorial on the subject has been received from the London staff and the question has been under consideration, but I do not think I should be justified in settling the matter, pending the Report of the Select Committee on Post Office Servants.

Ballinagh Postal Arrangements.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there is no postal delivery in the rural district of Ballinagh, county Cavan, attaching to Carrigan post office, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and also that in some cases the country people have to come two miles to post their letters; and whether, seeing that in the adjoining districts there is a daily delivery, he will recommend the erection of a pillar box, and generally improve postal facilities in the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As this Question has not been under consideration since 1903, I have called for a fresh Report on the subject. On its receipt I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Civil Service Pensions.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that women typists, Customs boatmen, clerks taken over in 1889 from the Submarine Telegraph Company, and certain other classes of civil servants, are allowed, under Clause 3 of The Superannuation Act, 1887, to count towards pension the whole of their temporary service which preceded established service, and that in the case of retirement of abstractors of the senior grade a similar concession has in every instance been withheld, only half of their temporary service being allowed to count towards pension, he will make arrangements whereby the members of the abstractor class shall in future be accorded equal treatment in the matter of superannuation with that of other grades whose unestablished service is allowed to count in full.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) In exercising the discretion entrusted to the Treasury by Section 3 of The Superannuation Act, 1887, with respect to the reckoning of temporary service for pension, regard is had to the character and conditions of the service rendered. Each case or class of cases must therefore be considered on its merits. The temporary service of the abstractors referred to in the Question was rendered in the capacity of copyists, and the regulations governing their employment expressly stated that no service in this capacity, however prolonged, would confer any claim to superannuation. It was found, however, at the time when these temporary copyists were first promoted to be abstractors that a portion of their work had in many cases been above the level of what was ordinarily required of copyists; and it was accordingly decided, as part of the terms on which they were placed on the establishment, that half of their service as copyists should be allowed to reckon for pension. I see no reason for extending this concession.

Second Division Clerks.

MR. TIMOTHY DAVIES (Fulham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether there are any recent instances in which the Treasury have withheld their sanction to the recommendations from responsible heads of departments for the promotion, on the ground of special fitness and merit, of certain of their senior assistant clerks (abstractor class) to the Second Division; and, if so, whether he can state the number of such cases; and whether, having regard to the fact that the senior assistant clerks are men of long service and experience to their several departments, and that they are at present penalised in the matter of superannuation, to the extent of half their early temporary service being disallowed towards pension, he will see that Treasury sanction to their promotion, when specially recommended by their responsible chiefs, shall not be refused to them.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I can only trace, since the beginning of 1904, one case (affecting two assistant clerks) in which the recommendation of the head of the department has not been approved by the Treasury. It would not be possible to give a general pledge that all such recommendations shall be approved, as the Treasury has necessarily to exercise a discretion in dealing with the recommendations of heads of departments under Clause 15 of the Order in Council of 29th November, 1898.

Cloudesley Charity Estate.

SIR JOHN DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Board, in dealing with the application of the London County Council for a Provisional Order to take a part of the Cloudesley Charity Estate for a school for mentally-afflicted children, are aware that the charity is the one large charity in Islington, that upon its grants other charities of Islington, including the Great Northern Hospital and the poorer churches, are largely dependent, and that the Order, if granted, would result in a deterioration in the value of the charity property, which could not be made good by money compensation; and whether he will consider the advisability of withholding his assent from this proposal.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am aware of the allegations referred to in the Question, and I have reason to hope that they may be exaggerated. But whether this is so or not, the Board, in considering whether a Provisional Order should be issued for the compulsory purchase of a site, have always held that any question as to the depreciation in value of surrounding property was for the consideration of Parliament when the Provisional Order Confirmation Bill is before it, and not for the Board.

Belfast National Schools—Building Advances.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what sum of money has been advanced towards the building of national schools in Belfast within the past ten years; the names of the parties to whom the money has been advanced; and the amount in each case, together with the names of the present managers of the several schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The total amount of loans made to non-vested schools in Belfast during the past ten years is £4,651, and the total amount of grants made to vested schools is £23,455 4s. 4d. I will forward to the hon. Member a statement giving the particulars asked for as to these loans and grants. They would run to a length exceeding the limits of an Answer.

Irish Creameries.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state how many dairy societies, or so-called creameries, are in existence in Ireland, and the number of proprietary ones, and what quantity of butter is produced annually in them and the probable annual value of the same for each year for the past three years; what has been the total amount given in subsidies to those dairy societies since the establishment of the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, and are any subsidies still being given to them; how many of those dairy societies have paid an annual dividend to shareholders, and what has been the contribution from them to the revenue; and whether the Department is at present contemplating a scheme to supply those dairy societies with the daily reports of the butter markets of the world, and will private traders in the butter trade be also supplied with the same information.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) It is understood by the Department of Agriculture that there are over 800 creameries in Ireland, of which 340 are co-operative concerns, the remainder being proprietary and joint stock creameries. There is no information available which would enable a reliable estimate to be made of the butter production of creameries or its value. No subsidies have been made by the Department to dairy societies. The Department will endeavour to procure information as to the number of societies that have paid dividends. No information is available as to the contribution from dairy societies to the revenue. A proposal was made that the Department should circulate among those creameries which would contribute to the expense of procuring the information particulars of prices at certain markets in the United Kingdom. It was decided not to take action in the matter for the present season, as the practicability of obtaining reliable information on the subject in the manner suggested was considered doubtful.

Irish Assistant Teachers.

Mr. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of assistant teachers in Irish national schools graded higher than third class, and their special qualifications to be so graded; and whether he will state the reasons why the assistant teacher in school No. 12,555, centre 10a, who was classed first-of-first under the rules in force previous to 1900, and who is a trained teacher, holding a first-of-first class diploma and having certificates in the following special subjects, Irish, drawing, singing, elementary science, kindergarten, and hand and eye training, and who, apart from performing her due share of ordinary school work, has conducted and conducts a singing class of about 100 pupils, without ever having had an unfavourable report, is not graded higher than third class.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that there are eighty-eight assistant teachers in receipt of salaries of the first or second grade. In 1900, when the new system of payments came into force, these persons were in receipt of incomes, exclusive of residual capitation grant, of greater amount than the maximum limit of the scale assigned for assistant teachers. They retain such higher incomes as long as they remain assistants under the provisions of Rule 200 of the Code of 1903. The *status* of the teacher, to whom it is assumed that the Question refers, is determined by the rule quoted, which provides that assistant teachers in the service before the 1st April, 1900, who had incomes, exclusive of the residual capitation grant, less than the maximum limit of the scale of incomes assigned for assistant teachers, are eligible for increase of income by increments to the maximum limit of the scale. This teacher's salary was raised to the maximum limit on 1st April, 1903.

Mountjoy Prison Governorship.

Mr. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, as representing the Irish Prisons Board, whether he is aware that a vacancy exists in Mountjoy Prison for the position of governor; and whether he will see that effect is given to the principle of promotion in any appointment that may be made, and that, should there be a competent person in the service, a stranger will not be brought in over his head.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed that there is no vacancy in either the governorship or the deputy governorship of Mountjoy Prison. The fact that the deputy governor is on temporary duty at another prison has probably given rise to the misconception. The claims and qualifications of subordinate officers receive careful consideration when appointments to higher posts are being made.

St. Patrick's Day at Riverstown.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that on the 17th March, St. Patrick's Day, a force of twenty extra police, under the command of District Inspector M'Govern, of Ballymote, was drafted into the district of Castlebaldwin, situate near Riverstown, in county Sligo, he will say by whose authority, or with what object this force was drafted into a peaceable locality, and the local band prevented from parading the public highway on the occasion; and will he say whether the presence of this force will entail any expense on the ratepayers of the locality.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) On 17th March an extra force of twelve men under the district inspector was drafted into the district mentioned, by order of the police authorities, with the object of preserving the peace in connection with a farm which is under the control of the Court of Chancery. I am informed that the local band was not prevented from parading the highway. The cost of the extra police is not chargeable to the ratepayers.

Irish Medical Officers' Salaries—Ballymahon Guardians' Resolution.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the passage of a Resolution by the Ballymahon Board of Guardians, asking to have Clause 6 of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, repealed in order to give the guardians a chance to effect amicable settlements with their medical officers when applying for increases of salary; and whether, as the present law places all increases as a full charge on the rates, some steps will be taken to modify this enactment immediately.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the Resolution referred to. In reply to the concluding part of the Question, I beg to refer to my reply to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for South Cork on the 12th instant.†

Major Blackhall's Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the name of the assessor who, within the past six months, fixed rents on the estate of Major H. Blackhall, in the union of Granard, North Longford, and will he say whether this gentleman was himself a land agent; and whether, in the case of future rent-fixings of the Commission, his services as an assessor will be employed.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The assessor referred to in the Question is Mr. J. D. Boyd, who is one of the permanent lay assistant commissioners. In Parliamentary Paper, No. 151, of 1902, Mr. Boyd is decribed as having been occupied in farming and as a land agent prior to his appointment. The Land Commission inform me that they have full confidence in Mr. Boyd's judgment and impartiality.

Mullingar Asylum Committee.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the adoption of a Resolution by the Mullingar district asylum committee asking to have all asylum charges made imperial charges; and whether he can hold out any hope of this being done.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I have received a copy of the Resolution referred to. The system under which the Government contributes to the maintenance of the lunatic poor is the same in Ireland as in England, and I cannot hold out any hope that special legislation for Ireland will be introduced.

King-Harman Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any representations have been recently made to the Estates Commissioners as to the sale of the King-Harman estate in the parish of Ballinamuck, North Longford; and whether, as this estate is in the main a congested estate with some 100 poor tenants living on it, the Commissioners will enter into negotiations with the landlord's solicitor, with a view to carrying through, on fair terms to the tenants, a sale of this property with the least possible delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to identify any proceedings for the sale of the estate referred to. They will be prepared to consider any application in the matter which may be made to them.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 876.

Swine Fever in Ireland.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many outbreaks of swine fever have been reported in Ireland for the six months last past; who was responsible for these reports locally; whether any special investigation took place on foot of reports; and, if so in what percentage, if any, were the reports substantiated.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) During the six months ended the 17th instant, 963 reports of supposed outbreaks of swine fever in Ireland were received by the Department of Agriculture. These reports emanated as a rule from the owners of the animals. In all cases the reports were fully investigated by veterinary inspectors acting for the Department. The result was that swine fever was found to exist in sixteen places only, the percentage of actual outbreaks to reports being 1·62.

Earl of Lucan's Grazing Farm at Louisburgh.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board purchased, about three years ago, from the Earl of Lucan a grazing farm at Tallanbaune, near Louisburgh, county Mayo, and that the tenants have been paying rent to the Board for the past two years; can he give any reason why the Board has not, up to the present, striped this land amongst the tenants, who live on miserable holdings and for whose benefit it was purchased; whether he is aware that two tenants of the Board live on the island of Invertekel; whether the Board intend to take any steps to migrate them on to the arable land; and can he say whether it is the intention of the Board to give any of this land to the grazier, who resides in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The fee of the lands in question did not become vested in the Congested Districts Board until May, 1905, whereupon notice to quit was served on the grazing tenant in occupation; and this notice will not mature until May next. When possession has been obtained the Board will lose no time in making arrangements for disposing of the land for the relief of congestion. Small holdings of tenants on any island on the estate will be enlarged if land is available. The island of Invertekel is not known. The Board have no knowledge of the grazier referred to in the Question, unless he be the grazing tenant already mentioned. All tenants in occupation of land belonging to the Board must pay rent until arrangements can be made for selling their holdings to them.

Artillery Firing on Dartmoor.

Mr. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the inconvenience to the farmers and general public which arises from the possibilities of artillery firing being practised on every day of the week in the summer months on Dartmoor, he will take steps to prevent any firing on Dartmoor on Saturdays.

(*Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Practice only takes place on Saturdays at Okehampton on very rare occasions, such as when bad weather has prevented practice on two or three days in the week. During last season it was carried out only on three Saturdays. I will see if it can be arranged that due notice shall be given whenever it is absolutely necessary to fire on Saturdays.

Expenditure on British Garrison in Egypt.

Mr. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary of State for War to what extent the Army Estimates for 1906–7 bear charges for a garrison in Egypt; and what expenditure has been incurred there by Great Britain under the Military Works Loan Acts since the first Act in 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Army Estimates for 1906–7 bear charges of about £230,000 for troops in Egypt, including the Soudan. The total expenditure incurred in Egypt under the Military Works Loan Acts from 1897 to the present time is about £166,000.

Royal Garrison Artillery.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the number of staff sergeants and sergeants in the Royal Garrison Artillery, and of the permanent staff of the Militia and Volunteers, who will be compulsorily discharged from the service on April 30th, and of the disadvantages that will be thereby imposed upon them, he will consider the advisability of amending Article 1160 of the pay warrant in the sense of substituting eight years' continual service in the rank of sergeant, immediately preceding the completion of twenty-one years' service, for twelve years' continual service in that rank, as now required.

(*Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Owing to the number of non-commissioned officers in the senior ranks of the Royal Garrison Artillery who were ineligible for service abroad through length of service, it was decided to call upon all who were forty years of age and had completed twenty-five years' service to retire upon pension. To avoid any hardship, all those who so desired were given four months' notice in lieu of the usual one month's notice laid down in the regulations for soldiers with more than twenty-one years' service. It cannot, therefore, be admitted that these men were suffering under any disadvantage, and no amendment of the pay warrant is considered necessary.

Connaught Rangers' Training.

DR. AMBROSE: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give any reason why the Connaught Rangers are taken out of Castlebar for annual training to a town in county Galway.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This Militia battalion is under orders to train in brigade with the two other battalions of its territorial regiment in county Galway. These arrangements are made by the general officer commanding-in-chief.

Foreign Naval Budgets.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether such comparison of British expenditure as have recently been made by the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary to the Admiralty with the naval and military budgets of France, Germany, and the United States, are on a fair basis having regard to the different systems of preparing financial accounts; and whether if there are any limiting considerations, he will cause inquiries to be made and a Return to be issued as to their nature.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) Comparisons of British expenditure with the military budgets of France, Germany, and the United States can be very general only, and any comparisons that have been made have been of this nature. For many reasons more detailed comparison is impracticable, and, owing to the entirely different conditions between our own and Continental Armies, the preparation of a Return, such as my hon. friend suggests, would entail a great expenditure of labour and would serve no good purpose.

House of Commons Procedure—Private Members' Privileges.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can say on how many days in each of the four years preceding the adoption of the rule providing for the ordinary meetings of the House at Two o'clock the House did meet at that hour on Tuesdays and Fridays and on any other days, and on how many days private Members were prevented from exercising their privileges in each of those years.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I am informed that the particulars which the hon. Member desires are as follows:—

Days on which the House met at Two o'clock and the Privileges of Private Members were taken from them at the Morning Sitting.

Session.	Date.	Day of the week.	Total number of days.
1898	29th March	Tuesday	3 Tuesdays.
	5th April	*Tuesday	
	19th April	Tuesday	
1899 (I. and II.)	Nil	Nil	Nil
1900 (I. and II.)	Nil	Nil	Nil
1901	2nd April	*Tuesday	6 Tuesdays.
	23rd April	Tuesday	
	30th April	Tuesday	
	7th May	Tuesday	
	14th May	Tuesday	
	21st May	Tuesday	

* Motions for the Adjournment at Easter.

Other Days on which the House met at two o'clock, but the privileges of private Members were not taken from them. 1898, Nil; 1899, Nil; 1900, Wednesday, 28th February (Ash Wednesday). 1901, Nil.

London Postal Service Auxiliary Labour.

MR. COOPER (Southwark, Bermondsey) To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will give the numbers of acting, temporary, casual, and supernumerary sorters and auxiliaries in the London postal service; and whether, in view of the condemnation of auxiliary labour by the Tweedmouth Committee, he can state whether any, and, if any, what steps have been taken since 1902 to abolish this form of labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The number of acting, temporary, casual, and supernumerary sorters and unestablished postmen employed for full-time duties in the London postal service is eighty-three. Their number is gradually being reduced, The numbers of auxiliary sorters and auxiliary postmen are 545 and 1,964, respectively; but they are being reduced in numbers and replaced, where practicable, by assistant postmen, who will be absorbed in due course into the established ranks. Steps have been and are still being taken to reduce the amount of auxiliary labour. The Tweedmouth Committee, however, fully recognised the impossibility of dispensing entirely with the services of auxiliary postmen.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

British Granite in Naval Works.

*MR. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it has been the custom of His Majesty's Government in the past to use only British granite in the construction of naval works.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): No, Sir; so far as I have been able to ascertain it has not been the custom to limit contractors to the use of British granite only in the construction of naval works.

*MR. HAY MORGAN: Have the Government decided what is to be their future policy in the matter?

*MR. LAMBERT: It is not proposed to reverse the action of our predecessors in this matter.

"Ragging" at Aldershot.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War a question of which I have given him private notice—whether a young officer of the Scots Guards now stationed at Aldershot has been set upon by his brother officers, who tore off his clothes, smeared him with motor oil, and covered his hair with jam; whether the young man is now suffering from a nervous breakdown brought on by this brutal conduct, to which he was subjected because he could not afford to live in the expensive style usual in the regiment; whether the warning of Lord Roberts with reference to military ragging is still in force; whether the officer commanding the regiment has been called upon for an explanation; whether an inquiry will be held; whether it will be open to the public; and whether, having regard to the importance of the case and the fact that the Judge Advocate-General is no longer a political officer responsible to the House for the conduct and management of courts-martial, the advice and assistance of the Law Officers would be obtained.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): What has happened is under judicial investigation, and, therefore, I cannot assume that the facts are as the hon. Gentleman has stated; but I will tell him how matters stand. The occurrences in question, whatever they were, took place on the 15th inst., late at night. The first I heard of it was on March 19th. I at once directed a preliminary inquiry, which has taken place. I have the Report, and that Report is under consideration; and I propose to direct that a full Court of inquiry should be held and a most searching investigation made. Four officers who are under suspicion of being implicated in what took place are under arrest. All other officers belonging to the regiment have been directed to curtail their leave and return at once. As to the procedure, that must be matter for consideration, but I propose to provide for all parties having opportunity for being fully heard when the matter is investigated. I do not think it will be necessary to bring in the Law Officers of the Crown, because we have the machinery for full inquiry under the Army Discipline Act.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May we understand that this full inquiry, which, I understand, will be private, will not preclude proceedings being taken afterwards, should they be considered necessary, by court-martial?

MR. HALDANE: As to the proceedings, I can only tell the hon. Member that it will be a searching inquiry conducted according to judicial form, and I will take care that everybody concerned shall have the opportunity of being heard and of putting his case.

British Indian Traders in the Transvaal.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether British Indian traders in the Transvaal are excluded from the use of certain train services, and are restricted in their use of the Johannesburg electric trams; whether the special registration fee of £3, and the regulations prohibiting ownership of land, are still enforced against them; and whether, in the Orange River Colony, the law prohibiting the entry of British Indian subjects, except for domestic service, is still maintained; and, if so, what steps it is proposed to take in the interest of British Indian subjects.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State understands that certain trains by which, as a matter of fact, coloured persons seldom travel are to be reserved for white people, but that special arrangements will be made on application for well-known coloured people desiring to travel by them. He also understands that restrictions have been found unavoidable in regard to their use of the Johannesburg electric trams. The registration fee of £3 and the prohibition of ownership of land, which are in accordance with the Law 3 of 1885, are being enforced. In the Orange River Colony the law referred to has not been as yet amended. The grievances of Indians in the Transvaal have, I need scarcely say, the cordial sympathy of His Majesty's Government, who will make every endeavour to obtain their redress, but, as I pointed out in debate on the 28th of February†, we lie under difficulties in dealing with such questions in Colonies which enjoy, or are about to receive, responsible government.

British Indian Subjects and the Transvaal and Orange River Constitutions.

Sir H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the scheme, which is now under the consideration of the Government, for granting a representative and responsible constitution in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, will provide for giving adequate representation to British Indian subjects of respectability and position, who have settled or may hereafter settle in these Colonies.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: I would remind the hon. Member of my reply to the hon. Member for Preston on the 15th instant,‡ when I informed him that the proposal to extend even the municipal franchise to coloured British subjects was abandoned in 1903, and that it was then asserted by the opponents of any form of native franchise that the proposal was a breach of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the conditions of surrender.

Sir H. COTTON: Am I to understand that the expression "natives" in the Treaty of Vereenining includes British Indians?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The expression "natives" has frequently been deemed to include natives of all the coloured races of Asia, Africa, and America, and while I am not aware that any special significance of that character is attached to it in the Treaty of Vereenining, it would be open to anyone hostile to the native franchise to contend that any other construction would be a breach of the treaty.

*Mr. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne): May I ask whether the Under-Secretary will direct his attention to a speech made by Lord Milner in March or April, 1903, at a Conference at Johannesburg, when the question of the municipal franchise was being discussed, and to the recommendation of Lord Milner upon the subject in that speech?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member should give notice of that Question.

Chinese Labour in South Africa.

Mr. FULLERTON (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will cause instructions to be issued to the British consular agents in China, directing them to resume their authority, and cancel the power given to the Transvaal Emigration Agency, so far as such power relates to those Chinese coolies not yet deported, but to whom licences were issued, from the 12th to the 18th November last.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. The policy of His Majesty's Government has already been very fully stated to and accepted by Parliament, and it does not include any interference with the fulfilment of licences issued under the late Administration.

Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.): Have the law officers of the Crown advised the Crown that it would be illegal to prevent the importation of these coolies from China? Would it be a breach of contract on our part?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The decision of His Majesty's Government in regard to those licences was a Cabinet decision taken after full consultation with high legal authorities.

Mr. BELLOC: Did they say we should be breaking the law if we prevented our Consuls in future allowing the Chinese to leave?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes. It was, I understand, the opinion of the Lord

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii, 1238.

‡ See (4) *Debates* cliii. 1400.

Chancellor and others who were consulted that to refuse to allow effect to be given to the 15,000 licences already issued would constitute a moral breach of contract, and that, had it involved a private individual, the contract would have been enforceable at law.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps, if any, have been taken to inform the Chinese labourers in the Transvaal that they are free to return to China should they so desire.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Chinese labourers have not been so informed as yet, as the mode of procedure is still under discussion with Lord Selborne, and some delay has been caused by his absence on tour from Johannesburg. If the hon. Member would repeat his Question after another week, I should hope to be in a position to give him the information he desires.

MR. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the offer of His Majesty's Government to repatriate the Chinese coolies employed in the Transvaal Colony under the Chinese Labour Ordinance, at the expense of the Imperial Exchequer, has been communicated to the coolies; if so, when was the communication made; and if the Colonial Office has received any, and, if so, how many acceptances from the coolies of the offer of His Majesty's Government to secure their free passages to their homes in China.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The offer of His Majesty's Government has not yet been communicated to the coolies. The exact form of procedure is still under discussion with Lord Selborne.

Criminal Procedure Code for South Africa.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies on what ground chapter 33 of the Indian Code of Criminal Procedure has been excepted from the orders in council extending the operation of that code to British East Africa.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Had the chapter referred to by the hon. Member not been omitted, cases of serious crime by European British subjects would have had to be tried at Bombay. A draft ordinance is now in course of preparation dealing comprehensively with all the courts of the East Africa Protectorate, and when this has become law it is proposed to replace the Indian Procedure codes by similar codes founded on their provisions and enacted by local ordinance.

Transvaal Compensation Commission.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Compensation Commission has completed its labours; how many claims for compensation were investigated, and what was the total amount of those claims; and what amount of compensation has been awarded.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I understand that the Commission has completed its labours, and the Secretary of State is awaiting the receipt of its report.

British East African Settlers' Grievances.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any complaints have reached him as to the forfeiture of land in East Africa; and whether he will take the earliest opportunity of introducing a certain amount of representative government into the territories of East Africa and Uganda, so that all complaints of a similar nature would get consideration before other persons than officials, and that His Majesty's Chief Commissioner could receive advice on measures necessary for the development of the country, and could have brought before him in a practical form any grievances from which the settlers at present suffer.

*MR. CHURCHILL: Two or three complaints as to forfeiture of land in East Africa have been received in the Colonial Office. One of these was received a few days ago from the hon. Member and is being investigated. It is not proposed to introduce representative government at present, but the Secretary of State is considering the question of introducing some form of Crown Colony government in connection with an address from the Colonist Association of British East Africa on the subject. In the meantime any suggestions for the development of the country will receive full consideration from the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State.

Indian Army on the North-West Frontier.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is in a position to lay before the House, either in the form of a Return or otherwise, a statement showing the principal items of expenditure, especially in regard to the acquisition of land, the laying down of cantonments, and the construction of barracks, which have been sanctioned for the purpose of reorganising and distributing the Indian Army on the North-West Frontier of India, and are estimated to cost about £9,000,000; and whether he is able to furnish any details of the special measures which have been independently sanctioned for the same purpose, and are estimated to cost a further sum of £2,000,000.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose, Burghs): I would refer my hon. friend to the reply given by me on March 22nd† to the hon. Member for the Walworth Division of Newington.

Tibet.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any information as to the effect of the reception of the Tashi Lama in India in promoting a feeling of cordiality on the part of the people of Tibet towards the British.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I have received no report on the subject. I am informed that the visit to India, which was a ceremonial one, passed off satisfactorily.

Indian Coolie Labour for the Transvaal.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if negotiations are in progress with regard to the introduction of Indian coolies to the Transvaal.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Not that I am aware of.

Arrest of a British Subject in Russia.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in communication with the Russian Government in respect of the arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, and subsequent expulsion from the country of Mr. Charles Webb, a British subject, resident in Russia; and if he will now give the Russian Government's explanation of thus treating a British subject.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) (for Sir EDWARD GREY): The matter is receiving the careful attention of His Majesty's Government. They are in communication with Mr. Webb for the purpose of obtaining from him a full statement of the circumstances of his case.

Higher Division Appointments in the Civil Service.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, pending a decision being arrived at by the Treasury, all appointments of last year's candidates for the Higher Division of the Civil Service have been suspended at the Admiralty by Treasury instructions; and, if so, what is the number of vacancies.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): Under the 1905 reorganisation of the Admiralty clerical staff, certain clerks of the Higher Division became redundant in that Department and are in process of absorption. I am not aware that any vacancies now exist on the authorised Higher Division establishment, but in March, 1905, the Treasury asked to be consulted before any fresh appointments were made to the upper staff.

Income Tax.

MR. GROVE (Northamptonshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can say what would be the addition to the revenue if an increased tax of 3d. in the pound were made on all incomes exceeding £2,000 per annum.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The Board of Inland

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 577.

Revenue have no data for forming such an estimate.

Afforesting Waste Crown Lands.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what steps, if any, have been taken to give effect to the suggestion of the Departmental Committee on Forestry in 1902, that the Woods and Forests Department should plant suitable waste lands under the control of the Crown or over which the Crown exercises manorial rights.

MR. McKENNA: The greater part of what are called waste lands belonging to the Crown are in Wales and are, generally speaking, at too high an altitude and much too exposed for planting. For these reasons and especially owing to the fact that rights of common exist over the whole of the waste lands over which the Crown exercises manorial rights, it has not been found practicable to plant any of them, except in one instance in Merionethshire, where the Crown acquired the adjacent farms. In that case about twenty-two acres of the waste lands have been planted, in addition to portions of the adjoining farm lands, amounting in all to about 105 acres. This, of course, involved giving notice to quit to the tenant. It is in contemplation to plant about another sixty-one acres of waste as a further experiment. The altitude is over 1,000 feet above the sea.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, N., Chorley): Can the hon. Gentleman say what the altitude is, in the opinion of the Treasury, above which it is considered unsuitable to plant in the British Islands?

MR. McKENNA: That would depend on the latitude.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): Is it on account of the altitude that planting is not going on?

MR. McKENNA: That is so.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS: A thousand feet?

MR. McKENNA: In Wales.

Sunday Trading.

LORD R. CECIL: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when he will be in a position to make an announcement about the Joint Committee of both Houses to which the question of Sunday trading will be referred.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I hope to be able to announce the names this week.

Aliens Act Administration.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that at a meeting of all the members of the Immigration Boards, held recently at the Guildhall, it was decided to recommend the Home Office to reduce the number of passengers constituting an immigrant ship from twelve to five, in consequence of the evasion of the Act which had taken place under the twelve minimum, he will state for what reason the number has now been raised to twenty.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Is it not the case that the alleged facts on which this Question is based are not true?

*MR. GLADSTONE: The members of the panel of the London Immigration Board at the meeting referred to considered the question of the number of alien steerage passengers which should constitute a ship an immigrant ship, but did not make any recommendation on the subject. The order restoring the number twenty, originally fixed in the Act, was made in the exercise of the discretion conferred upon me by the Act. My object in making it was to facilitate the Cross Channel traffic, about which complaints had been received from the French Government, and to ease certain difficulties in the working of the Act which had been experienced at non-immigration ports.

Returns of Immigrants.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why the monthly Returns of immigrants have not been published; and whether he will furnish a Return showing the number of immigrants arriving in the port of London during

January and February, 1905, and January and February, 1906.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: As I have already stated, the monthly Returns of alien immigration from the Continent have been discontinued because the Act under which the information was collected has been repealed. I have under consideration the best method of publishing the information collected under the Act of last session. In answer to the last paragraph I can give the following figures:—The Returns for January and February, 1905, show 4,075 and 3,323 alien passengers as having arrived in London from the Continent in those months respectively, or a total of 7,398, including a certain number of persons en route for other countries, and of seamen. In the present year the figures collected under the new and more complete system show totals for January and February of 4,208 and 3,626, or, together, 7,834. Of these, 850 are known to have gone out of the country, 246 are shown in the Returns as proceeding out of the country, and fifty-five had return tickets to a foreign country; while 109 were seamen and eighty-six were refused leave to land. If these figures are deducted, a total of 6,488 for the two months is left. Of this total, I ought to mention, more than half consists of first and second class passengers. Such passengers were not included in the Returns of previous years, and no information as to them is now available.

Release of Mr. Barmash.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state why a foreign convict named William Barmash, who was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude in December, 1902, has been released; and whether he is to be allowed to remain in this country.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: This man's sentence was reduced by my predecessor from ten years to five years on the strong recommendation of the judge. On a review of all the circumstances of the case I have thought it right to extend further lenience by releasing Barmash on licence six months earlier than would otherwise have been the case. It is not, in my opinion, expedient to state the grounds for the action of my predecessor and myself.

Sir W. EVANS GORDON: What is the answer to the last part of the Question?

*Mr. GLADSTONE: He does not come under the Aliens Act.

British Emigrants.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can give the numbers of emigrants of British origin who have been assisted by the various emigration committees to leave this country during the present year, and if they equal in number the aliens who have come into this country during the same period.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I regret that I am unable to give the figures desired.

International Exchange of Bonds and Securities.

Mr. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can, in the Board of Trade Returns from time to time, or at least once a year, give a return or an estimate of the amount of the export and import of bonds and securities between this country and other foreign countries.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): This matter has been frequently considered, but I regret that I can hold out no hope that it will be found practicable to take the course suggested, as there are no means of forming such an estimate as is proposed.

Gas Meter Testing.

Mr. S. COLLINGS (Lambeth, Kennington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the Sales of Gas Act, 1859, prescribes the method of testing gas meters, but makes no provision for testing the indices of these meters, although the largest amount of errors is likely to arise in such indices; that the Astronomer Royal reported to the Treasury in 1860 that this omission rendered the Act nugatory and useless; that a Select Committee of the House reported in favour of amending the Act; that in 1870 the Standards Commission also reported that the Act should be amended and the Board of Trade given power to make regulations; and that the Board of Trade prepared the draft of an amending Bill in 1882; and whether the Board of Trade is now prepared to introduce a Bill, or to take any other measures to remedy the present state of the law as to testing gas meters.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Act in question does not specificially lay down the method of testing the indices of gas meters, but it does require that no meter shall be stamped unless it registers correctly within certain limits. I am aware that, as stated by my hon. friend, attention has from time to time been called to the absence of precise directions as to the testing of indices, but the Board of Trade have not received any complaint on this point for some years past. I shall, however, be happy to look further into the matter, and to consider whether any steps seem necessary.

Inspectors of Electric Railways.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether all the Board of Trade inspectors, deputed to report on railways or tramways worked by electric power, are fully-qualified electrical engineers.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Statutory inspectors of railways and tramways to be worked by electricity are made, so far as the electrical equipment is concerned, by the Board's electrical adviser, who is a fully-qualified electrical engineer, and all questions regarding the use of electrical energy for the working of such lines are referred to that officer.

Southport Express Disaster.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the evidence produced at the inquiry held on behalf of the Board of Trade into the accident to an electric express at Hall Road Station, Southport, in July last, shows that several minutes, probably four, elasped before the live rails were rendered dead; and will he consider the expediency of requiring railway companies using electrically-charged rails to adopt a system under which the live rails may be at once rendered dead in case of accident.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am aware that in the case of the accident in question, the electrically-charged rail was not rendered "dead" until about four minutes after the accident, and this is clearly stated in the Report of the inspecting officer. No injury appears to have resulted in this case from the live rail, but the stationmaster at Hall Road should have at once made use of the telephone provided from his station to the power stations, and had he done so, the current would have been cut off in a few seconds. I understand that iron bars are carried on all the electrically-worked trains on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and are supplied to the station-masters for the purpose of setting up a short circuit and thereby blowing out the circuit breakers at the electrical sub-stations in cases of emergency.

British Flour Mills.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that in our imports of corn from abroad flour has, during the past six months, largely taken the place of wheat; and whether he attributes to this cause the fact that our flour mills are now mostly running short time.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The imports of wheatmeal and flour (in equivalent of grain) during the last six months formed 23 per cent. of our total imports of wheat and flour. This was a considerable increase compared with the previous year, when the corresponding percentage was fourteen, but it shows a decline compared with the average of the same periods of the previous five years, when the percentage of flour was twenty-six. I have heard it stated that the temporary slackness in the flour trade in this country is connected with over-stocking following a large recent increase in the total capacity of British flour mills.

Hours of Railway Employes.

*MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will insist upon all railway companies giving in Returns of working hours of servants asked for as continuous, where any interval of rest is less than eight hours between the actual time of starting and finishing duty.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the Returns referred to are the periodical Returns obtained under the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, I may say that instructions are given that the length of a period of duty is to be reckoned from start to finish, no deduction being made for intervals of rest. These instructions are printed with the Return issued for March, 1905. In Returns obtained in dealing with complaints under the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, the companies are similarly required to show the total hours.

Metropolitan District Railway.

*Mr. HUDSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade in how many cases on the Metropolitan District Railway have the axles of vehicles in use on trains for the conveyance of passengers broken since the commencement of electric traction power; have any inquiries been held into the cause of failure of such axles; and can he say what is the cause of the breakages.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am in communication with the Railway Company on the subject, and should be glad if the hon. Member would put down his Question again in the course of a day or two.

Alien Pilots.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state whether he is now able to include a clause dealing with Alien pilots in the Merchant Shipping Bill.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: In reply to this Question, and that addressed by the hon. Member to my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,† I fear I am not yet in a position to give a definite reply on this matter.

Irish Industries.

Mr. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the amount of employment given to the Irish peasants in the hand-embroidering, hemstitching, and drawn-thread work trade, he will give instructions for Returns to be kept in future showing the quantity and value of this class of work imported into the United Kingdom from foreign countries.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The form of the Trade Accounts for the present year has been fixed some time ago and cannot conveniently be altered, but the suggestion shall be referred to the Committee for the revision of Trade Accounts which will meet in the autumn to consider the changes that are desirable for the following year.

Education Rate Demand Notes.

Sir ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will give instructions that the separate amount of the education rate shall in future be plainly and fully stated on every poor rate demand note, and not concealed, as at the present time, under the term relief of the poor and other expenses of the guardians; and that all overseers of the poor shall be directed to give full information to magistrates, ratepayers, and all concerned as to the amount of the rate levied from time to time for educational purposes.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): In the great majority of cases the amount of rate levied for education purposes is included in the demand note for the poor rate in the item "county contributions" or "borough rate." Generally speaking, county and borough councils are not required by law to inform the overseers how any such item is made up, and consequently the overseers do not necessarily know how much of it is to be raised for the purposes of education. Hence it does not seem to be practicable to call upon them to give in the demand note or otherwise the particulars which my hon. friend desires.

Municipal Accounts

Mr. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is prepared to order a Departmental

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† Sir GILBERT PARKER: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the question of proposed legislation to exclude alien pilots from our waters has been found compatible with our treaties with foreign countries.

Inquiry into the system of keeping and auditing municipal accounts, including the Poor Law.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The system of keeping the accounts of the various Local Authorities in England and Wales is now being investigated by a Departmental Committee, and the audit of the accounts of Poor Law Authorities is a matter coming within the purview of the Royal Commission who are inquiring into the working of the Poor Law. I am considering the question of the audit of the accounts of town councils, but I am not at present prepared to appoint a Departmental Committee on the subject.

Bailey's Lane, Stamford Hill.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in consequence of his representations, the Urban District Council of Tottenham (Middlesex) have taken any steps to render fit for use the thoroughfare known as Bailey's Lane, adjoining the church and parsonage of St. Bartholomew's, Stamford Hill, or to remove the accumulations of foul water and decaying fish and vegetable matter, whereby danger is being occasioned to the health of those attending the church and inhabiting the parsonage and other dwelling-houses in the neighbourhood; and, if not, whether he can do anything further to compel the District Council of Tottenham to abate this nuisance.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Urban District Council do not appear to have taken any direct steps to make up Bailey's Lane. I understand that they consider that in the first instance the boundary along the lane should be adjusted between Hackney and Tottenham with a view to a part of the cost of making up the road being borne by the Hackney Borough Council, but that the latter body are unwilling to agree to this without an adjustment of the boundary along the whole line between Tottenham and Hackney. Negotiations are stated to be in progress as to this. I will not lose sight of the matter. As regards the removal of accumulations of the kind referred to in the Question, I am informed that the Tottenham Medical Officer of Health visited Bailey's Lane on Saturday, and that he states that there is no trace whatever of any fish or vegetable refuse from one end of the lane to the other. He adds that it was similarly free when he visited it on the 20th instant.

Unemployed Act.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch, I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Bill to amend the Unemployed Act of 1905 will be introduced.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am unable at present to fix a date for this purpose.

LORD R. CECIL: Will it be this session?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I hope so.

Adulteration of Butter.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he proposes taking some steps to prevent the practice of blending or faking butter, now so prevalent in England; whether he will consider the advisability of having the standard of percentage of water for all butters lowered; and whether, seeing the extent to which the fraud of blending margarine with pure butter is being practised, he will adopt some method by which such blending may be detected.

*MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) (for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): The suggestions made by the hon. Member will doubtless be considered by the Select Committee on the butter trade which is now sitting. No legislation on the subject could well be proposed until the Report of the Committee is received.

Sheep-Worrying in Northamptonshire.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the attention of the Board has been drawn to frequent cases of sheep-worrying by vagrant dogs during the present lambing season in Northamptonshire, causing serious losses to farmers, and to the insufficiency for existing means of checking this evil; and whether steps will be taken to secure the passing of the Dogs Bill as promptly as possible.

*Mr. J. A. PEASE (for Sir Edward Strachey): The Board of Agriculture have made inquiry into the serious cases of sheep-worrying in Northamptonshire to which my hon. friend refers. It appears that between February 2nd and 20th thirty-one sheep were killed outright and forty-two others were so badly bitten that they have since died or had to be killed. There is no doubt that further powers are needed to deal with the evil, and it is hoped that the Bill which has been already introduced on the subject will be considered at an early date.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: Has the hon. Gentleman any proof whatever that these sheep were worried by vagrant dogs and not by pet dogs?

*Mr. J. A. PEASE: I must ask for notice.

Committee on the Butter Trade.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Committee appointed to inquire and report about the butter trade are likely to furnish their Report within the year; and, if so, whether it is proposed to introduce legislation this year; if not, what steps, if any, will be taken by the Government in the meantime to inspect factories where butter is manipulated.

*Mr. J. A. PEASE (for Sir Edward Strachey): My hon. friend hopes that the Committee may report before the end of the session, but is afraid it may prove impracticable to introduce legislation on the subject this year. The Board of Agriculture have no power at present to inspect butter factories.

Mr. JOYCE: But if the owners are willing, will they be inspected?

*Mr. J. A. PEASE I will bring the suggestion before my hon. friend, so that the point may be considered.

Regent's Park Roads.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will explain why, seeing that £1,200 per mile per year is expended upon the roads of Hyde Park, only £300 per mile per year is expended upon the roads of Regent's Park; what is the reason for this difference; will he say how many men are employed daily in cleaning the roads of Regent's Park; what is the average age of these men and what is their rate of pay; and why the gates of Regent's Park, which have never been closed for twenty years, cannot be closed; and will he state under what authority, or under what Act of Parliament, does the Office of Works deal with the Regent's Park roads.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale): The expenditure on the Hyde Park roads is £1,100 per mile per year and not £1,200, and whilst that on the Regent's Park roads was formerly £300 it will be more in future, and in the current year is £520 per mile. The difference between the cost is due to the greater width of, and greater traffic upon, the roads in Hyde Park; and the maintenance of the Regent's Park roads, moreover, is divided between the Office of Works and the Crown Estate Paving Commissioners. The number of men employed daily on the Regent's Park Roads is on an average twelve. Their average age is thirty-eight, and their pay 4s. a day. It has never been found necessary to close the gates of Regent's Park, and I hope such necessity will not arise. The present arrangements for the maintenance of the roads in that Park have existed since the constitution of the Commissioners of Works, but it is a matter of custom rather than of enactment. Efforts are being made to remove the inconvenience of the present dual control.

Road Refuges at Westminster.

Mr. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has taken any, and what, steps to communicate with the Westminster City Council with a view to provide a refuge at the crossing of Bridge Street from the Embankment to the Houses of Parliament.

Mr. HARCOURT: The Office of Works have no jurisdiction in this matter, but I have conveyed the hon. Member's views—in which I concur—to the Westminster City Council, who will, I am sure, favourably consider the suggestion.

St. James's Park.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can see his way to opening more of the enclosed grass spaces in St. James's Park for the use of children.

MR. HARCOURT: I have arranged that more accommodation shall be afforded to children in St. James's Park in future. From Easter onwards a triangular piece of grass at the north-east corner towards the Duke of York's steps and a larger and well shaded piece at the south-west corner, opposite the Wellington Barracks, will be thrown open to children only.

Land Transfer Returns.

MR. ROWLANDS: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if he will grant a Return, in continuation of the Returns that were issued annually from 1899 to 1902, giving the numbers of titles that in the years 1903, 1904, and 1905 were registered under the Land Transfer Act, 1897, as absolute, qualified, possessory, and good leasehold, respectively, with the amount of the fees paid in respect thereof.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.) suggested that if the hon. Member would put down a Motion for the Return he would consider it.

Portree—Staffin Road.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if the Congested Districts Board is now prepared to give a grant to the Skye District Committee to aid in the formation of a road to connect Portree with the populous district of Staffin; and if he is aware that the delay in the formation of this road has hindered the development of the diatomite industry in this district.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Congested Districts Board have not seen their way to incur the expenditure involved in a grant for the construction of this road. They have been assured that the diatomite would never be carried by road to Portree, ten miles for shipment, when it can be shipped on the spot.

Tenure of Fishermen's Houses in the North.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Sheriff Guthrie Smith, in a Supplement to the Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1884–5, referred to the precarious tenure of many of the houses of fishermen in the North; whether there has been any subsequent Report; and, if not, whether he is prepared to direct further inquiry to be made on the subject.

MR. SINCLAIR: I have studied the Report mentioned. No subsequent Report has been made, and I will now make further inquiry into the subject.

Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Allowances.

MR. J. A. BRYCE (Inverness Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will introduce in this session a Bill to restore to school boards in Scotland the power of supplementing the supperannuation allowance to teachers, as provided by Section 6 of Clause 31, and Section 8 of Clause 27, respectively, of the Education (Scotland) Bills, introduced by the late Government in 1904 and 1905.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Government regret the delay which has taken place, for which they are not responsible, and the facts mentioned are familiar to them. But they cannot undertake to introduce legislation upon this subject this session.

Stornoway Fishermen's Dwellings.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state whether the twenty-nine houses built by the Congested Districts Board at the Battery Park, Stornoway, as dwellings for fishermen, have yet been made watertight; and will he say whether these houses were passed as fit for occupation by Colonel Gore Booth, the engineer to the Congested Districts Board.

MR. SINCLAIR: Steps have been already taken to have the defect referred to remedied. The houses have not yet been taken over from the contractor.

MR. WEIR: How is it houses in that state have been allowed to be occupied?

MR. SINCLAIR asked for notice of the Question.

Crofters Acts Amendment Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if the promised Bill to amend the Crofters Acts will be brought in before Easter.

MR. SINCLAIR: No pledge can be given as to date, but every effort is being made to hasten the introduction of the Bill.

Habost Typhoid Fever Outbreak.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that an outbreak of typhoid fever at Habost, in the Ness district of the parish of Barvas, Island of Lewis, which, up to February 13th, had resulted in seventy-five cases, is attributed by the local Medical Officer of Health for Barvas parish to the drinking water being contaminated; and will he state what steps have been taken to secure a supply of pure water.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the unfortunate outbreak of fever referred to, and that it has been attributed to the water supply. The Local Government Board have called on the Local Authority for information as to what steps have been taken to improve it, and I am glad to be able to say that a new well has been sunk at Habost, Ness, at a spot selected by the medical officer and sanitary inspector, and that on the 23rd instant the medical officer reported favourably upon the water, and that a specification is being prepared to have the well protected and water brought to the road-side, and that the work will be proceeded with at once.

Orkney Bishopric Lands.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Office of Woods, if he will state the average amount of feu duties or casualty duties derived from the bishopric lands in Orkney; and whether, in view of the difficulty that such feu and casualty duties place in the way of any scheme of law reform, he will consider on what terms he would be prepared to release the land from this burden.

MR. MCKENNA: The receipts by the Crown from feu, etc., duties of lands within the former Bishopric of Orkney amount, on the average of the past five years, to £617 per annum, and the casualties of superiority in respect of lands in the islands, including the bishopric, to £46. The feu, etc., duties can be redeemed at rates varying from twenty-five to thirty-three years purchase, according to circumstances; and the casualties on the terms fixed by the Conveyancing (Scotland) Act, 1874, *i.e.*, on payment of one-and-a-half times the amount of the highest casualty.

Foreshore Fishing Rights in Orkney.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Woods and Forests, if he is aware that several years back the Woods and Forests leased or sold to Mr. Middlemore the rights to certain foreshore fishing in Orkney, and that in the same lease or covenant to sell, on behalf of the public, it was stipulated that the public right to the fishing which they had from time immemorial enjoyed should be preserved under regulations to be made by the Secretary for Scotland, and that since then, owing to protracted litigation, no such regulations have been issued; and whether he will now take steps to cancel, in the interests of the public, this lease.

MR. MCKENNA: The lease, which contains an option of purchase and has been extended to Martinmas next, cannot be cancelled, but arrangements have for more than a year past been in operation, under which the public can obtain fishing tickets for 1s. a day during the currency of the lease. Should the sale be carried out any regulations which may be made as regards the fishing will be submitted for the approval of the Secretary for Scotland.

Irish Estates in Chancery.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in view of the fact that when an estate has come under the control of the Court of Chancery and tenants in actual occupation of holdings on it in immediate and unbroken succession to several generations of similar tenants of the same holding take, not of their own motion but by order of the court, court leases of the holdings, they are thereby deprived of the right of getting judicial rents fixed, he will say what statutory authority is there for holding that the circumstances of the estate or of its owners should thus destroy the rights which the tenants would otherwise possess; and, in view of the number of tenants in various parts of Ireland who are excluded from the Land Courts on these grounds, does His Majesty's Government propose to find any remedy.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): The hon. Member is under a misapprehension as to the law upon this subject. The position of tenants in actual occupation of holdings is not rendered in any way less favourable by reason of the landlord's estate being brought under the control of the court, and no tenant's existing contract of tenancy can be determined by the Court under circumstances other than those under which it could be determined by the landlord. The Court never orders existing tenants to take out "Court leases," and no present tenant is ever deprived by the Court of his right to get a fair rent fixed.

County Court Accounts.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the recorders have now made an order, requiring every county court account in equity proceedings and others to be kept in the joint names of the county court judge or recorder and of the clerk of the peace for the time being; and why this procedure, which has always been followed in the West Riding of the county of Cork, was not followed by the recorder in the East Riding; whether he can yet say when and by whom the investigation into the defalcations of B. Curry, late assistant of the clerk of the peace, will be held; and whether the Southern Law Association, whose allegations have been impugned, will have an opportunity of being represented.

Mr. CHERRY: I am informed by the clerk of the peace that the order referred to in the Question was received in Cork on the 20th instant. He also tells me that there has not hitherto been in the West Riding of the county of Cork any printed or written rule in existence regulating the lodgment of money in court other than the rules of 1890 under the County Officers and Courts Act of 1877, but that the practitioners in that jurisdiction followed the practice of lodging all monies paid into court to the joint credit of the county court judge and the clerk of the peace. In the great majority of cases the East Riding practitioners, he also informs me, have followed the same procedure, and it is only in a few cases in which the practice has been unfortunately departed from that the misappropriation of monies by Curry has taken place. I can assure the hon. Member that I shall endeavour by every possible means to recover the money which has been lost, for the benefit of the suitors in the court, but I can make no statement as to any special inquiry into the matter until the proceedings which are about to be commenced against the sureties of Curry and of the late clerk of the peace are brought to a hearing.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: I do not, of course, blame the hon. and learned Gentleman for statements which are supplied to him by others, but I want to know who, in his opinion, should really be held responsible for these embezzlements. I should like to ask him, further, whether it is quite fair for an official to suggest that solicitors are to blame for not observing a rule which is now for the first time promulgated?

Mr. CHERRY: I should not like to state, in my place here, who I think is responsible for the matter. It may be a question of criminal liability, and it would be very unfair for me to make any such statement as suggested. With regard to the second Question, the official only answered the interrogatory put to him by me with reference to the facts. He does not blame solicitors for not observing the rule; he merely states the fact that under the existing rule most of the solicitors in the East Riding had lodged the money to joint credit, but that, unfortunately, some had departed from that practice.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say whether in the proposed Inquiry a hearing will be given to the Southern Law Association, which represents the solicitors, and which has unanimously given an opinion different to that of the official in question?

Mr. CHERRY: I should not like to answer a hypothetical Question. When the Question comes up of appointing a Commission of Inquiry, if one is appointed at all, then will be the time to raise the point. But it may be there will be no necessity for an Inquiry.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: Surely it will be necessary to inquire whether or not it was the fault of the Recorder of Cork that his officer was guilty of this offence.

Mr. CHERRY: I cannot answer that Question.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN: I shall take an early opportunity of calling attention to this matter.

Valuation of Land Improvements.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, in case of appeal against a judicial rent, is it still the practice, as stated by Mr. Fitzgerald in his evidence before a Select Committee in 1894, for the court valuer to adopt the estimated value of improvements made by the Sub-Commission, instead of making an independent examination and estimate; and, if not, can he refer to any rule forbidding the continuance of that practice, or say when it was discontinued.

Mr. CHERRY: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. I am informed by the Land Commissioners that the effect of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald's evidence in 1894 is not quite correctly set out in the Question, but that the practice then existing has been changed by the passing of the Land Act, 1903. Since the passing of that Act, in fair rent appeals the holdings are inspected and reported upon by an assessor who has heard the evidence, having been present in court during the hearing of the case, and he has to report (1) the improvements on the holding made wholly or partly by the landlord, or at his cost; (2) the improvements on the holding made wholly or partly by the tenant, or at his cost. It is his duty to make an independent examination and estimate of the value of the improvements in every case, and not to adopt the views of the Assistant Commissioners upon these matters.

Irish Land Law Administration.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that while the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, in harmony with the English Valuation Acts, requires the court to ascertain and record, first the gross fair rent of holding as a whole, and afterwards the tenant's improvements and other matters to be deducted, in order to find the net fair rent, the court in practice pursues the directly contrary course, to the detriment of the tenant; and will he say whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

Mr. CHERRY: So far as I am aware, the Land Commission Court strictly complies with the directions of the Land Act, 1896, in first ascertaining the gross fair rent of a holding and afterwards the value of the tenant's improvements and other matters necessary to arrive at the net fair rent. Should any Sub-Commission neglect or refuse to carry out these statutory requirements, an appeal lies to a Judicial Commissioner, and from him to the Court of Appeal in Ireland.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that a tenant applying to have a judicial rent fixed is required to claim improvements by endorsement on his notice, and to prove them in court; and whether, seeing that the statute empowers the court to make this requirement, and that all improvements not so claimed and proved are presumed to be the landlord's property, contrary to fact and to law, he proposes to take any steps to prevent the tenant being thus deprived of the statutory presumption in his favour, and of the property which the statute aimed at securing to him.

Mr. CHERRY: I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to a Question almost identical in terms addressed by him to me on the 7th of this month.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 453.

Irish Land—Tenants' Improvements.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the pink schedules, Form 39, on the files in rent-fixing cases commonly show that the landlord has not made any improvement, that improvements have been made, and that the rent has been fixed on the gross value, including the improvements, on the ground that although the court valuer has ascertained and reported the improvements the tenant has not claimed them by schedule in court; and whether His Majesty's Government will enforce the law requiring all improvements to be deemed the tenant's until the contrary has been shown, and exempting the tenant's improvement from rent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): I am informed by the Land Commission that the pink schedules referred to do not commonly show the result which is stated in the first part of the Question. The Commissioners fix fair rents in accordance with the provisions of the Land Law Acts and the procedure is regulated by statutory rules. As to the concluding part of the Question, I am afraid that I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member on Wednesday last.†

Untenanted Lands.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he arrange that in all Reports and Returns of transactions under the Land Act of 1903, when the land dealt with is untenanted, the Poor Law valuation shall be shown in lieu of yearly rent.

Mr. BRYCE: The Land Commission inform me that untenanted land is, as a rule, purchased by the Estates Commissioners for division into parcels and distribution amongst the classes of persons referred to in Section 2 (1) of the Act of 1903. The tenement valuation is not always ascertainable even for the untenanted land so purchased as a whole, and when such land is divided into parcels it becomes necessary to have a revision of the tenement valuation to suit each parcel sold. This revision is not completed until after the untenanted land has been divided. It would not, therefore, be possible to show in the Returns the valuation in respect of the re-sales of such land in parcels.

General Post Office Regulations—Private Box Fees at Wexford.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, in view of a statement in the General Post Office Regulations Book that the charge for a private box varies from £2 2s. to £3 a year at the larger post offices, but that at the smaller offices the amount is £1 1s. a year, he will say whether the charge of £2 2s. is made all over the three Kingdoms in towns of the same population as Wexford, about 11,000; and, if not, can he explain why the payment for a private box was increased from £1 1s. to £2 2s. on Messrs. Pierce and Company, Wexford, Cycle Works.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Yes, Sir. The fee for a private box is now £2 2s. a year at all head offices of the size of Wexford.

Cork County Mail Service.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork County, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that necessity exists for a mail between Durrus and Kilcrohane, county Cork; and whether he will have one established.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question of establishing such a service has not been previously considered, but I have called for a Report on the subject, and I will communicate with the hon. Member as soon as I can arrive at a decision in the matter.

Donaghadee Telephone Service.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has come to any decision as to the provision of a telephone service for Donaghadee, county Down.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member the information he desires, for considerable labour would be required to compile such a Return.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 379.

Corry (Westmeath) Postal Arrangements.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General will he inquire into the present postal arrangements in the Corry and Rathaspic district, Westmeath, with a view to having them improved by the opening of a post office at Corry.

Mr. SIDNEY BUXTON: I find that the amount of correspondence for the district in which Corry is situated is very small indeed, and that the cost of the existing service is comparatively high. I am sorry that under these circumstances I am unable to comply with the hon. Member's wishes.

Irish Devolution.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the correspondence which passed between the late Prime Minister and the late Viceroy of Ireland with reference to the policy of devolution is in the possession of the Government and will be published; and, if not, whether he can take any steps in the interest of the public to obtain its publication.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I have made inquiries and I cannot ascertain that the correspondence in question is in the possession of the Government. The hon. Member is, no doubt, aware that letters passing between Ministers are not usually of a character which calls for their preservation in the Government Departments. I confess I do not see what steps I can take in the circumstances to obtain its publication, if the late Prime Minister or Lord Dudley objects to that course being adopted.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Lord Dudley, the late Viceroy, declared in a public letter the other day that he would be glad to publish the correspondence if he could get the permission of the late Prime Minister. In view of the importance of the whole truth about this matter being published, can the right hon. Gentleman suggest any means by which we can get that assent?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is not for me either to address myself directly to the late Prime Minister or to suggest to the hon. Member the best way of doing so. But I have no doubt the hon. Member's ingenuity will suggest some means to him.

Crofters Act Amendment Bill.

*Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if arrangements will be made for the introduction of the Crofters Act Amendment Bill before Easter.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland has already answered a Question to the same effect.

*Mr. MORTON said the Question had not been definitely answered by the Secretary for Scotland and he would repeat this Question in a day or two.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) asked what Supply would be taken on Thursday and as to other business.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The first business on Wednesday will be the County Justices Qualification Bill, which will be introduced under the Ten Minutes' Rule, and the following order will be the Trade Disputes Bill, which was originally spoken of as coming on earlier in the week, but is now fixed for Wednesday. The Estimates put down for Thursday will be the remaining Army Estimates and the Woods and Forests Vote of the Civil Service Estimates, Class 2.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): Can the right hon. Gentleman fix a day for the introduction of the Education Bill?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not yet, but I hope before Easter.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): When will the House have an opportunity of discussing the Procedure Committee's Report?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The procedure rules will be put down for discussion before Easter, but not this week.

WALLIS' DIVORCE BILL [LORDS].

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with Documents deposited, in the case of Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]; and that the Clerk do carry the said Message.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Wallis' Divorce Bill [Lords]; and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any amended Clause of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

NEW BILLS.

RESERVE FORCES BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Reserve Forces," presented by Mr. Secretary Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 119.]

SEAMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' FALSE CHARACTERS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the falsification of Seamen's and Soldiers' certificates of service or discharge, and to false statements made, used, or given in connection with entry or enlistment into His Majesty's naval, military, or marine forces," presented by Mr. Secretary Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 120.]

LONDON MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.

"To extend the Hours of Polling at the election of members of the London County Council and of the Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Dickinson; supported by Mr. Acland-Allen, Mr. Branch, Mr. Waterlow, and Mr. Wiles; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 121.]

PETROLEUM BILL.

"To amend The Petroleum Act, 1879," presented by Mr. J. W. Benn; supported by Mr. Alden, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Bowerman, and Mr. Steadman; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 122.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS (KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS).

Ordered, That Mr. Fenwick be a Member of the Select Committee on House of Commons (Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

*THE SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I hope I shall not have to inflict on the House a very long statement; the subject is familiar to most Members; and a considerable part of the Bill deals with details in the recommendations of the Departmental Committee which are rather subjects for discussion in Committee than on any other stage. The question with which the Bill deals has advanced by stages, and will advance. Up to 1880 there was the common law for the benefit of the workman, and in that year it was reinforced by the Employers' Liability Act, which continued in operation, with all the disadvantages attending the legal distinctions of negligence and common employment until 1897, when a totally new departure was made with the Workmen's Compensation Act, founded on the doctrine laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that, when a person on his own responsibility sets in motion an agency that creates risks for others, he ought to be similarly responsible for what he does. The acceptance of the liability of employers was made subject in 1897 to two considerations; first, the right of compensation was limited to the most dangerous employments, and, secondly, the liability was limited to those employers who could either afford to pay directly or through insurance against the risk. Then in 1900 the Workmen's Compensation Act of that year was extended to agricultural labourers and gardeners. In that Act two of the main principles of the Act of 1897 were abandoned, because it was made to include two employments which are among the safest in the country; and, in the second place, it included employment which exposed small farmers to very considerable risks on the ground that they would not be able to pay heavy compensation in case of serious injury to a workman and might not insure, because the premium on insurance was out of all proportion to the risk. The Government now think that the time has arrived for a wide extension of the Act of 1897 to every class of labour, and in the Bill a new principle is adopted which differentiates it from the Act of 1897. That Act excluded all classes of workmen who were not directly and expressly included; and it is now proposed to reverse this, and, subject to the definition of a workman in the Bill, all will be included who are not expressly excluded. The definition is important, as it is really a governing factor in the Bill. A workman includes any person not a police-constable, clerk, shop assistant, outworker, domestic servant, or a member of the employer's family dwelling in his house who works under contract for wages or serves under apprenticeship by way of manual labour or otherwise, and whether the contract is expressed or implied, oral or in writing. Under that definition certain classes of the community are excluded; but the House will observe that workmen employed in workshops, in transport service, fishermen, postmen, and seamen will be brought within the operation of the Act. With regard to seamen, the Committee which considered the subject two years ago recommended that their case should be dealt with under Section 207 of the Merchant Shipping Act, and hon. Members will know that under that Act provision was made for seamen injured during the voyage, but after landing they had to take their chance. The Government consider that the best and simplest plan would be to bring them under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and we propose, therefore, to deal with them in opposition to the proposal of the Committee. When a seaman lands after a voyage during which he has been partially or totally incapacitated he will be able to claim under the Workman's Compensation Act The difficulty of small employers which considerably hampered Parliament in 1897 is still with us. There are a number of small workshops throughout the country and a number of small employments in which an employer is practically a workman himself; and, as hon. Members know, it is the small employer who, as a rule, neglects to insure and in case of serious injury is unable to pay very heavy compensation. According to the evidence given before the Committee, 25 per cent. of the employers in the building trade do not insure at all, and probably the greater proportion of that 25 per cent. consist of small employers. It does not always happen that small employers do not insure, for the report of the Committee mentioned stevedores as an important exception and who, though they paid a high premium, did as a rule insure. But, putting aside exceptions, small employers prefer to take the risk of accidents rather than to pay the minimum premium out of all proportion to the risks in their particular trades. The Committee spent a good deal of time on this question and pointed out that the successful working of the Act of 1897 was largely due to the organisation of the system of mutual insurance agencies and the action of the larger trade unions. When there was organised co-operation the Act of 1897 had worked extremely well. But the Committee went on to point out that in industries where employers and workmen were not organised it was doubtful if the same results could be achieved and it was difficult to say how far small employers would insure. It is dangerous to concede by law a right which in many cases will prove to be illusory; and for that reason we propose that employers whose workmen do not exceed five in number shall not come under the operations of the Act. That limitation does not apply to agriculture — the clause relating to agriculture provides that the test shall be one permanent workman—

and there are some other exceptions. Under this limitation there will no doubt be hardships and anomalies, but this Bill is not and cannot be final. There is no reason why different classes of workpeople, such as shop assistants and clerks, should be excluded from the Bill, but in certain cases small employers would have to pay a premium out of all proportion to the risk in their particular trade, and for that reason a large number would not insure at all. Then, if there were an accident, the employee would not have a substantial man to proceed against and the employer probably would be ruined. The ultimate solution of the whole question is probably to be found in a scheme of compulsory insurance. When we have seen how this Bill works, fresh proposals might be made to make up proved deficiencies, to extend it to other classes, and to get rid of limitations; and some plan of cheap and easy insurance on a small scale through the medium of the Post Office might be possible. But we have not reached that point yet. There is one important limitation to the exclusion of workmen under the limit of five. It is provided that if the accident to a workman coming under the definition is attributable to the use by the employer of machinery driven by steam, water, or other mechanical power, or if the workman at the time of the accident was employed in the care or management of horses, mining, quarrying, or building operations, or in laying or repairing any electric line or works, the limit of five shall not apply in the case of such workmen. The House will see that hat is an important limitation of the exclusion, and I think it will agree that it is a valuable and practical application of the principle of workmen's compensation to cases which most require it, and which otherwise would be cut out by the limitation. I have now dealt with the basis and scope of the Bill. One incidental advantage of the new form will be that our old friend the "undertaker" will go out of workmen's compensation, and we get rid of the definition of included trades which has been so fruitful of litigation under the Act. Most of the proposals in this Bill are based wholly or in part on the valuable recommendations of the Departmental Committee over which Sir Kenelm Digby presided. In the first place, we propose to extend workmen's compensation to industrial diseases. That involves a new departure. Of all the casualties to which the industrial army is unfortunately liable, those arising from disease are the most pitiable and disastrous. The Committee did not recommend that industrial diseases should be included in the Bill, but the Government thought the case was so strong that, although the difficulties were great, they thought a strong effort ought to be made to surmount them. Therefore, we propose to include in the Bill the following diseases:—Anthrax, lead poisoning, mercury poisoning, phosphorus poisoning, arsenic poisoning, and ankylostomiasis. The clause which deals with this question contains the following general provision. Where a workman is certified to be suffering from disease, and thereby partially or totally disabled from earning full wages, and his disease is due to the nature of the employment on which he has been engaged during the previous twelve months, he is to be entitled to compensation, the compensation to be recovered from the employer who last employed him. But if the employer proves that the disease was, in fact, contracted or developed while the workman was in the service of another employer, or other employers, there is to be proportionate and collective responsibility. In these cases the limit of five is not applicable, and the Secretary of State is given powers by Provisional Order to extend this provision to other diseases. We have given effect to the Committee's recommendations in respect of sub-contracts, and the law will be amended to give the workman security for the recovery of compensation, the principal not to be liable, however, for accidents on premises which are not under his control or management. With regard to the payment of compensation, this is not made under the existing law until a fortnight has elapsed from the time of the accident. The Committee think that any interference with this provision of the law would involve a grave departure from the system of 1897. The Government have given serious consideration to this matter, knowing full well that there is a strong objection to any interference with the law as it stands. We have considered the case of industries which are alleged already to be hampered by the cost of the Acts. The Committee found that hitherto the pecuniary burden imposed by the Acts upon the employers has not been excessive. On the other hand, we have to remember that the employers have not yet come to the point when compensation under the Act of 1897 will reach its highest level, after which it will probably go down to a certain extent. But since 1897, taking into account all available experience, the Government have come to the conclusion that trade has not been hampered by the Act sufficiently to prevent what they considered a further measure of justice. There was ample evidence given to the Committee that large masses of men, women, and children whose weekly earnings amounted to something between 5s. and 25s. a week are put to the most serious hardship by the operation of the law as it stands. We have therefore come to the conclusion that the two weeks shall be reduced to one. That is the proposal in the Bill. Of course it will put a certain increased cost upon the employer. The cost has been variously estimated by experts before the Committee at from 25 per cent. up to 50 per cent. I will not at this moment hazard an opinion as to the incidence of that increased cost. A small proportion possibly may fall upon wages; but it will probably be distributed between the proprietor and the customer—at any rate, it will be distributed upon the resources of the trade without, as we think, doing any injury at all to the trade, and it is a measure of justice which we cannot leave out of this Bill. Under the present law compensation is based on the wages received or agreed to be paid while the workman is in the service of the same employer. But the effect of the law as it stands imposes a great hardship on some classes of workmen, especially on those engaged in casual labour. The Committee have given instances of hardship which occur under the present law. A man earning from 6s. to 7s. a day may be awarded 3s. 6d. a week. Another case was given in which a man went on for a night's work, and, being injured, received only 2s. a week. Another more extreme case was that of a man, who, in five days earned 30s. and then went on to a fresh job, and was injured in the first hour, and his compensation was reckoned out at 3½d. per week. It is quite obvious that there are great anomalies under the law as it stands which must be removed. Therefore, in the Bill the Government have adopted the recommendation of the Committee, which is founded, virtually, upon the Employers' Liability Act standard. If a man has worked with an employer for two weeks continuously or more then his compensation, when he is injured, will be founded on the wages he is receiving in that employment, but, if he has not worked continuously for two weeks, then the court must have regard to the earnings which such workman would receive in the same trade, in the same employment, and in the same district. In regard to the reassessment for partial incapacity, the proposal of the Bill is that the weekly payment is not to exceed one-half the difference between the amount of the average weekly earnings before the accident, and the amount which the workman is earning, or is fit to earn. That is to say, if a man who is earning £2 a week is injured and is awarded compensation at the rate of a £1 a week, is, on the reassessment, found capable of earning £1 a week, he would get 10s. a week compensation, so that he would be in a position to earn 30s. a week. There is power under the Bill to commute weekly payments which continued for not less than six months for a lump sum not exceeding £500. With regard to the question of aged persons and minors, the Committee find that the Acts have largely increased the difficulties of old men finding and retaining employment, and the difficulty is believed to be growing. They came practically to the same conclusion with regard to infirm and maimed persons, and they proposed that a lower rate of compensation should be payable in regard to both these classes. The two cases of the aged person and of the infirm and maimed person appears to the Government to be governed by somewhat different considerations. I confess that personally I am somewhat inclined to extend to both classes in the proposals of the Committee, but the difficulties are undoubtedly rather more serious in the case of the infirm and maimed person. Other considerations arise, which I will not mention now, and so, on the whole, the Government have decided only to deal with the recommendation of the Committee in its application to the aged person. After the age of sixty the employer is enabled to make special arrangements with the aged person under which, in case of death, a maximum payment of £25 is payable, and, in the case of injury and incapacity, weekly compensation with a maximum of 10s. a week. The Committee suggested 5s. The Government think that is too small an amount, and they, therefore, extend it to 10s. In the case of minors, again, very great hardships have arisen under the present law. A boy, for example, receiving 4s. a week, who is injured and incapacitated for life, cannot get more than 2s. a week compensation. The Bill provides that, where a minor is injured who earns less than 20s. a week, 100 per cent. should be substituted for 50 per cent. in respect of compensation based on his weekly earnings, but the weekly payment is not to exceed 10s. a week. If the case is reviewed within twelve months or more after after the accident the amount of the weekly payment may be increased to any amount not exceeding 50 per cent. of the weekly sum which the workman would probably have been earning at the date of the review if he had remained uninjured, but not in any any case more than £1 a week. The Bill authorises the payment into court by the employer of a lump sum in case of a fatal accident where dependents are left, to be invested at the discretion of the registrar. The Bill also deals with the case of widows, and provision is made, where there is evidence before the court that a widow who obtained compensation under the Act was prone to misconduct, for the court to apply the whole or part of the compensation, which otherwise would accrue to the widow, for the benefit of the other dependents. I now come to the question of medical referees. As the law now stands, when there is an accident and a workman is injured, he has to submit himself to the employer's doctor, who reports to the employer. If there is disagreement then there is no remedy but proceedings in the courts. If proceedings are taken under the Employers' Liability Act medical evidence is taken, but it is not competent to bring a medical referee into court; but if they are taken under the Workmen's Compensation Act, after hearing the medical evidence, a medical referee may be appointed, and his judgment is final. But that leads to considerable delay and cost, and so under the Bill it is provided that if there is no agreement after injury between the employer and the workman, on the report of the employer's doctor, the employer or the workman, on payment of a fee, can apply to the court, and the registrar may at once appoint a medical referee, whose judgment will be final. And in case of review either party in the same way can apply to the court, and the registrar will appoint a referee whose judgment will be final. The Government hope that that provision will save a good deal of unnecessary cost and delay. Provision is also taken in the Bill that the Secretary of State may, with the sanction of the Treasury, appoint medical men to be referees under the Act, and, subject to Treasury regulations, remuneration and expenses may be paid to them out of public money. There are various other minor points of detail, the consideration of which I propose to leave to another stage. The Government are aware that the change in the basis of the Act will bring out new conditions, new points, and they will welcome suggestions. They will have the benefit of the criticism and information of the House, and I have no doubt that the Bill in its passage through the House will be greatly improved and strengthened. There is one important consideration on which I should like to touch, and that is the question of safety under the Workmen's Compensation Act. It was feared in 1897 that the adoption of the new principle would lead to more accidents. It is maintained by the Government, on the other hand, that the contrary result will probably ensue. The Committee find that no evidence has been brought before them which enables them to find that any great improvement in the direction of safety is to be placed to the credit of the Act, and their conclusion on the matter has reference to an important point which was raised in the evidence of Commander Smith with regard to the power of the court, under the Act of 1897, to set any fines imposed under the Factory any Workshop Act against the compensation due to the workman, and that that provision removed the Act from any penal operation. The Committee propose that that particular part of the clause should be repealed, and the Government have adopted that recommendation. The Committee say—

> "On the whole we feel unable to come to the conclusion that the operation of the Compensation Act of 1897 has had any marked or

ascertainable effect, one way or the other, upon the safety of the workman."

Therefore, in considering this question anew, we must not flatter ourselves that by providing compensation we provide increased security for the workman. In my judgment that increased security will have to be found in the operation of other Acts, and more particularly, of course, in the operations of the Factory and Workshop Act and the Mines Regulation Act. There is one further point which I think will give general satisfaction. The Bill which I propose to introduce is in the form of a consolidating Act, incorporating the Acts of 1897 and 1900, so that the House will have plainly before them, in more or less simple English, the whole statement of the case with regard to the compensation of workmen under the law. In these circumstances I venture on an appeal to the House. The Government are submitting the whole subject of workmen's compensation and are opening it all up, and as this is done for the convenience of the House I hope that questions which are not only settled, but which are supposed to be satisfactorily settled, will not be unnecessarily re-opened so as to hamper the progress of the Act. Our main object is to pass the Bill into law this session, and we offer it to the House in the hope that it will be of permanent practical benefit to all that are included within the scope of its provisions.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to consolidate and amend the law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment."—(*Mr. Gladstone*).

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): I am sure I am voicing the opinion of the whole House when I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the clearness and ability with which he has dealt with a very complicated subject. We have all listened to him with very great pleasure, we have all felt the difficulty of his task, and recognised the excellent manner in which he has discharged it. I do not think there is any difference of opinion as to the object to be aimed at. We all welcome a Bill to amend the Act of 1897. We feel that an Amendment of that Act is very much wanted. The Act, as the right hon. Gentleman has explained, was a new procedure in legislation in 1897, and for that reason it had to be to a certain extent experimental and tentative, and, therefore, we need not be surprised at the fact that after working eight or nine years it requires some considerable amendment. But the experience of those eight or nine years, I think, on the whole, has been very satisfactory, but certainly the time has now come when we might deal with many matters which require amendment, and as the right hon. Gentleman proposes to do, very largely extend the Act in it operations towards the people who come under it. I have listened very carefully to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I gather from him that not only is the Bill to be an amending, but a consolidating, Bill. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on this fact, and I admire his courage in advoiding the temptation to legislate by reference. I know from the experience I had in introducing a measure on this subject last year the very great difficulty of dealing with it purely by an amending Bill, and I think that the right hon. Gentleman has taken a wise, and, I am bound to say, a courageous course in bringing in the Bill in the form he has done. I may assure him that so far as I am concerned, and so far as my friends on this side of the House are concerned, we will accept the suggestion that he has made to us in regard to not opening up unnecessary subjects. Generally speaking, subject to three or four points for amendment on which we feel strongly, we shall give all the assistance we can to secure that this measure shall become law this session The Bill, I admit, is a more ambitious one than that which I had the honour to introduce to the House last year. We had a debate on the Second Reading of that Bill, but the measure did not get beyond that stage. As the right hon. Gentleman has explained, the present Bill proceeds by different machinery from that of the original Act, and from that proposed in the Bill of last year, which followed that of the parent Act. I understand that, whereas in the original Act and in the Bill of last year all trades were excluded except those which were specially included under the right hon. Gentleman's Bill all trades are included except those which are excluded by name. That, I think, is an improvement, but it is rather opposed to the advice given by the Departmental Committee presided over by Sir Kenelm Digby. I wish to associate myself with the praise given by the right hon. Gentleman to that Committee, because I was at the Home Office at the time and I know the extreme care and great attention which they gave to this subject. The present Bill, I understand, extends the operations of the parent Act to injury to health in dangerous trades—that is to say, it gives compensation in cases of lead poisoning, anthrax, and mercury poisoning, and in similar cases mentioned in the schedule of the Bill. The question of including these trades was pressed upon us very strongly last year by my hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire. He moved an Amendment to the Second Reading of the Bill suggesting that no Bill would be satisfactory which did not give compensation in these cases, and, therefore, I congratulate him on having so far pressed his case upon the attention of the public and of his own Party as to secure the inclusion of these trades within the scope of the measure. My only objection then was, and my only criticism now is, that I think it will be found an extremely difficult provision to work. The Act has hitherto been devoted to compensation for accidents. It has been laid down that an accident must be something of which the date can be fixed, and I think it would be rather difficult, notwithstanding all the right hon. Gentleman has said, to fix the date when infection was incurred in such a case as lead poisoning, or mercury poisoning. It might be rather difficult to find on which employer the cost of compensation should be cast. I only make that remark as a friendly criticism, for I think there is great difficulty in the matter, and I wish the House to bear in mind that we must not in this case, while wishing to be generous in our extension of the Act, do injury to the employers. If it could be proved that a workman had contracted the disease in a certain employment, I think the case for compensation under the Act would be very strong indeed, but in many instances men pass from one employer to another, and as some of these diseases are very insidious and slow in becoming known, it may be very difficult indeed to find the right man upon whom to place the onus of paying compensation. I do not put myself at all in hostility to this extension of the Act. As I have pointed out, we based our Bill last year very closely on the Report of the Commission. The Commission did not recommend this, and although we were sympathetic towards the proposal we felt the difficulties were great, and we did not include it. But if the right hon. Gentleman who has so pluckily attempted to deal with this subject is successful, and if it can be done without inflicting hardship on employers, I am sure we wish him well. Then, I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill extends compensation to seamen and fishermen. The Departmental Committee, after carefully considering this question, recommended that compensation to seamen was a matter which ought to be dealt with by an amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act. I mentioned that subject in introducing my measure last year, and hinted that it was the intention of the Government to find this compensation for seamen by the method suggested, namely, an Amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman has thoroughly satisfied himself that it can be worked under this measure. Had I not known that the right hon. Gentleman was going to introduce it in this Bill, I might have suggested that it should have formed a matter to be dealt with under the Merchant Shipping Bill now before the House. I am very glad that fishermen are going to be included in this Bill. I think the Departmental Committee suggested that this matter was so difficult that it should be left to the advice of a special Committee after special inquiry. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman has either had that special inquiry or is satisfied that the interests of seamen can be properly looked after under the provisions of this Bill. There is only one other point of criticism I want to make, and that is with regard to the chief departure from the spirit, at all events, of the measure which was introduced last year—that is as to the "fourteen days." The right hon. Gentleman explained to the House that the Departmental Committee did not make this recommendation; in fact they thought that the law in this respect should be left as it is. He is not prepared to follow their advice, nor does he go to the whole extent of abolishing the "fourteen days," but he suggests a compromise of "seven days." Under the Act of 1897 an employer was not liable for an accident where a man was disabled for a period of less than two weeks, nor, in the case of an accident for which compensation was payable, in respect of the first fortnight even in a case of prolonged disablement. I always understood that the object of the first fortnight's exclusion was to prevent malingering and the multiplication of small claims. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that seven days will be a sufficient modification to meet the case. That is a point which has been eloquently and ably put forward by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, and I shall be very anxious to hear whether they are satisfied with the compromise, or whether they think the low limit named should not be enacted. It is clear, I think, that a very great amount of expense to the employer will be caused by this alteration. Again, I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman has taken care to consult employers of labour, especially on his own side of the House, with regard to this extra burden which he is placing upon them. I am anxious to give every reasonable facility to cover reasonable cases in the interests of the employees, but we must not not in our desire to act generously to them either make the Act unworkable or throw unreasonable cost upon industry. The Committee which sat under the chairmanship of Sir Kenelm Digby took a great deal of evidence on this point. As to the additional risk incurred and the cost of insurance, the General Accident Company thought that the additional premium required would be 35 per cent. and the General Insurance thought it would be 50 per cent. If the assurance companies still hold that these figures are correct, we shall have seriously to consider whether such a scheme would not throw too great a burden on the employer. I am most anxious that the Act should prove successful, and I hope that when the Bill is in Committee this question of burden on the employers will be carefully discussed. I do not want to press it now or on the Second Reading, for I am anxious that the measure should pass into law as quickly as possible; but details can always be more usefully considered in Committee than on the floor of the House. I am sure that hon. Members of the Labour Party below the gangway want only a measure which will be fair as between man and man, and that they will endeavour by their criticisms and Amendments to make it a workable measure and one likely to be accepted by all classes of employers and employed. Whether the right hon. the Home Secretary has gone too far or not in amending the Act of 1897, or in extending the benefits of the Act to further trades — the general principle being admitted—we must wait to see; but, so far as we could gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the measure is satisfactory and I trust, therefore, that the House will agree to the First and Second Readings, leaving all these details to be considered fully in Committee.

MR. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth) said that as employer of labour he believed this Bill could be very easily simplified so as to avoid trouble and uncertainty in various ways. He meant that it should provide for compensation for all accidents, and the compensation to begin from the date of the accident. That was, he believed, the only way to arrive at a solution of this matter which would be satisfactory to all interested.

*MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said he wished to offer a few observations on the speech of the right hon. the Home Secretary and on the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman had asked leave to introduce into the House. First of all on behalf of the Party with which he was identified, he welcomed the right hon. Gentleman's statement of the projected Bill as being, to a large extent at all events, satisfactory from their point of view; and he could promise that it would have a helpful and sympathetic consideration with a view to having it amended in their direction and passed into law. It seemed to him that the name of the Bill was to some extent a misnomer. The Bill would not compensate. It provided merely for a maintenance being given to a man who was injured. Therefore, it seemed to the Labour Party that there should be some Amendment in the name of the Bill which would more accurately define what the Bill really was. On the whole, however, he felt satisfied that not only in its form but in its scope, as indicated in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Bill would to a very large extent meet the wishes of the Labour

Party. The Act of 1897 had been of inestimable benefit to a very large number of working people throughout the length and breadth of the country. With all its defects and blemishes it had proved one of the best bits of social legislation that had been put on the Statute Book in recent years. He wished to go a little further, and to pay a well-merited tribute of indebtedness to one who was largely instrumental in getting that Act passed through Parliament. That right hon. Gentleman long ago contributed articles to magazines advocating what was then a novel principle in English law. He introduced that principle as an Amendment on the Bill of 1893, and had it afterwards successfully embodied in the Act of 1897. It was needless to say that reference was made to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. He was all the more satisfied to pay that tribute of indebtedness to the right hon. Gentleman, for it was the vogue to jump upon his by no means prostrate form. A good deal had been said as to the deficiencies of the Act of 1897, but he believed that a great deal of the litigation and of the money which had found its way into the lawyers' pockets had been caused by the confusing lines between the "ins" and the "outs." He remembered the report of a debate eight or nine years ago in which it was predicted by hon. Gentlemen in this House, especially those who represented the mine-owners, that the Bill would lead to vast litigation; and some even went the length of describing it as a "Lawyers' Employment Bill." He had had a good deal of experience in regard to the working of the Act of 1897, and had had the opportunity of hearing the testimony of others who had had more, and all he could say was that the cases which had been settled and money paid without litigation at all was from 90 to 95 per cent. of the whole. From that point of view the Bill had been on the whole satisfactory; but there was no reason why the 5 or 10 per cent. of litigation should not also be reduced. In his belief, there would be no complete solution of the difficulty until all men, no matter what employment they were in, were included in the scope of the measure. It had been said that only dangerous trades were included in the last Act, but agricultural labourers were afterwards included, and no one would seriously contend that agriculture was a dangerous employment. He was sorry to hear that while anyone employing more than five men was to be included in the Bill, all small employers having fewer than five employees were to be excluded. That would be a fruitful source of litigation and confusion which would only benefit the lawyers and the agents of the insurance companies. He hoped that the Bill would be amended in these respects. He knew many small workshops where fewer than five men were employed under the most dangerous conditions—probably more dangerous than in large workshops. But it would be no good including them on paper only. Therefore, if they were to be included there must be some provision whereby the money should be there when wanted. That carried with it some form of compulsory insurance. The right hon. Gentleman said that the time had not yet come for that. That remained to be seen. He was inclined to think that compulsory insurance would even now be necessary; but if the Bill was carried further than its present scope, he was certain that compulsory insurance would be absolutely necessary. He knew that there were some who said that compulsory insurance, or insurance of any character, carried with it increased risk. There might be something in that argument, but, after all, the contention seemed to him to be advanced by those who strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. It was perfectly obvious that unnecessary danger was run by the men upon our railway systems, and that there were many safer couplings than those now in use, and yet the House refused to carry out the policy of enforcing the use of these couplings upon the railway companies. It was true that there were many ways and means by which the danger could be minimised, and, after all, insurance companies were not made up of simple Simons, and in many cases they refused to take premiums, because they knew that those who offered them had not taken the ordinary precautions which were necessary to ensure safety in their workshops. He thought that inspection was one of the best remedies. Let them increase the number of inspectors, and increase their power and draw the inspectors from the practical workshop, release the inspector from the large amount of clerical duty he had to perform, and, above all, let in the light of day upon the causes of those accidents which occurred through the ignorance of unlearned men, or of inmature youths. He believed that in the direction he had alluded to lay the greatest field of promise, and that they ought not to disregard insurance. He knew that insurance had its evils, and quite agreed that the Government might take those evils into their consideration. When they did, he thought that the Government should offer some inducement to small employers to insure. He thought that the Government should go so far as to make the system of insurance compulsory; but if they were not disposed to go that length, he thought they might offer some alternative scheme of insurance as against private insurance, and induce small employers to insure through the agency of the Post Office. It ought, moreover, to be made impossible for insurance agents to do, as they did now, viz., go and visit men in hospital immediately after an injury and make bargains with them. This was most improper, as the men knowing nothing of the law, often assented to terms much below those to which they were entitled. The men often yielded to the temptation of receiving a lump sum, and he thought something ought to be done to make agreements entered into with an injured man under these circumstances absolutely null and void. In the third place, something should be done, he was not quite clear what, to prevent what now took place to some extent in regard to insurance companies coercing employers not to employ old men, or physically defective men. He learned with great gratification that those suffering from industrial diseases were to be dealt with by this Bill, but he was not quite sure that the best means were being taken towards a satisfactory solution. He understood that in order to carry out the idea of the Bill there would be some system of proportional liability placed upon the employers of labour who had employed an injured person, or a poisoned person. He was afraid that method was rather a clumsy one, as it would be very difficult to ascertain where a man got the disease or was poisoned. It would, moreover, be difficult to enforce the decision. A much more hopeful method would have been to do as was done in the Potteries, where a trade fund was created, and no matter where the man was injured, the compensation was taken from the trade fund, and spread over the whole of the industry. As to the schedule of dangerous diseases, he noticed that anthrax was included, but thought that a good many more diseases might have been likewise put on the list. He rejoiced in the provision by means of which out-workers were to be protected, but he hoped the out-worker was not to be protected only if he happened to be working in a place which was scheduled as being engineering, harbour, or canal works. That did not carry them far enough. The out-worker might be working in a brewery which he did not think was scheduled. A good many out-workers, moreover, did work in places where they had to hang on by their eyebrows in order to stick up a pipe. He thought the only satisfactory provision would be one by which all out-workers would be protected. The provisions as to the assessment of weekly wages were on the whole satisfactory as far as they went—at all events, they were passable; but when they came to consider the question of reassessment, he thought the Home Secretary had given way too much to the representations of the employers. He hoped some re-arrangement would be made which would practically leave the question in its present form, which, on the whole, worked fairly. At present there was a discretionary power vested in the County Court Judges, and it would be well if that power were left with them, because, on the whole, they had exercised their discretion with great wisdom. He thought the Home Secretary had quite unnecessarily called attention to the case of the old men. It was one of the most painful incidents in connection with our present industrial conditions that old men should be hurried out of our workshops. By calling attention to the old men, and making special provision for them, the attention of employers was called to the subject, and they were encouraged to get rid of them. He hoped that more generous provisions would be inserted in favour of this class of workers. As to minors, he thought the provisions of the Bill were on the whole satisfactory. He remembered acting on behalf of a young man, aged nineteen years, who had lost three fingers off one of his hands. He was just leaving his apprenticeship, and his pay was 7s. 6d. a week. He was paid 3s. 9d. a week for a few weeks, and then got nothing further. He took it that the provisions of the Bill would make a far more generous provision in such a case as that. There was reason in the arrangement that the decision of the doctor, with regard to the extent of the injuries, should be taken as final; and it was fairly satisfactory provided the doctor was one in whom both sides would have confidence. In order to ensure that, it was necessary that the doctor be a public official, and he gathered that that would be the case. As to the fourteen days exemption, he understood that the Home Secretary had conceded half their demands, and he hoped he would concede three-quarters. They quite réalised the fact that there was danger of malingering, because, after all, workmen were only human beings, and sometimes they tried to get a day's holiday. Trade unions thought if they paid after three days that was sufficient to prevent abuse, and to secure the society against malingering. He thought the hon. Gentleman might take that as satisfactory, and make his measure conform with that experience. Those who had previously been within the scope of the Act had been the best paid workmen; but they were now going to bring in the workmen whose wages were miserably small, and to whom a week on the sick-list would be a serious thing. Another point to which he would ask the right hon. Gentleman's generous consideration was the question of dependents. He would like to see the law of Scotland and England assimilated in this matter. He saw no objection to incorporating step-parents in "dependents," and if they brought in parents they might also under certain conditions bring in brothers and sisters. He was at the present moment acquainted with a man, the father of a family, whose house was being kept for him by his sister; and it would be a very serious thing for the sister if that man had an accident. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would include both these classes in "dependents," and thereby avoid a great deal of trouble. He was glad to hear of the repeal of part 1, Sub-section 5, and that their old friend "the undertaker" would disappear. He should also like to see the abolition of the twenty feet for quarries. That should also disappear as well as the thirty feet for houses. He welcomed the inclusion of seamen in this measure although he confessed that he was induced to sign the majority report of the Departmental Committee, which had the effect of pr posing that seamen should be dealt with under a special Act, because he believed there were special circumstances connected with the life of seamen which rendered the conditions of their inclusion in this Bill peculiar. He therefore ventured to hope that, as seamen were included, the provisions of Section 207 of the Merchant Shipping Act would also be included, so far as the seamen were concerned.

*Mr. GLADSTONE said they did not interfere with the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act in any way. This Bill only applied to the man injured when he was in England.

*Mr. BARNES said, if that were so, of course it was quite right that the seamen should come under the Act. He would say nothing further now. There were other questions, but they be could dealt with in Committee. He would only ask the right hon. Gentleman to say, when he replied, in what way he was going to deal with the shop assistants. As he understood, shop assistants were not included in this Bill, and it was not proposed that they should be. There were, however, many shop assistants who were working under dangerous conditions. In his opinion shop assistants should be included, though they might not be employed under dangerous conditions. If there was little danger there would be specially low insurance premiums, and inasmuch as many of these persons were working in large warehouses which were analagous to work shops and factories, they should be brought within the Act. On the whole the Bill seemed satisfactory, and he welcomed it and hoped that during its passage through this House its scope would be widened to include those classes to which he had alluded.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that compulsory insurance in some form or other lay at the root of all the improvements to which the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division had alluded. The most extraordinary fact about all our legislation of this kind was that we never paid the slightest attention to what took place in other countries. We were hopelessly in the rear of every country in Europe in this matter, and owing to the fact that we never attended any of the international conferences we did not know that all the problems which were being inquired into to-day had been inquired into and solved by every foreign country. That this country was not likely to adopt the German scheme had been very clearly seen before the introduction of the original Bill, and had been more clearly seen since. But the German scheme was not the last word that had been said upon this subject. The modified French scheme, which was being adopted by many other countries, might well be adopted here. All the suggestions which the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow had made had been met in France. Although the French law was exceedingly complicated and had not the simplicity of the German system, it met all these difficulties; and by its variable system of drawing insurances from four distinct sources gave everyone security. He did not, however, know how this question was to be raised on this Bill, because it was opposed to the whole form of the Bill and all our legislation on these matters. With regard to the second point raised by the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division, there was no more interesting or difficult question than subcontracting. On that point he had not been able to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman said he had got rid of the "undertaker" altogether. That was not a word introduced by the late Government. It was a word introduced at the last moment in the House of Lords by a private peer, and in the face of the enormous difficulty which this question presented the noble Lords jumped at the the phrase. The question was a most difficult one and perplexed the House for a considerable time. There were cases in which it was desired to get at the subcontractor, and cases in which it was desired to get at the other man, and the difficulty was how to get at the man wanted. It was easy enough to say "you must go for 'A'" or "you must go for 'B'" but the difficulty of putting such a thing into the law was exceedingly great. It was the point on which the previous Act broke down, and was a most interesting and important point. Another matter in which the French law, imitated now in other countries, had met our difficulty was that of the definition of "workmen." The question as to what men should be brought in as workmen was one that had caused a great deal of trouble. Among the miners, for instance, there were a great many persons who were partly workmen and partly employers in a small way. This question had at times given rise to a great deal of litigation. The French law dealt with this question by declaring that, over a certain rate of pay, the workmen should only be compensated to the extent of a proportion of his pay, and in that way it got over the question of the man who was partly a workman and partly an employer on a small scale. Let the House consider what it was they were asked to do. They were asked to exclude, arbitrarily from the benefit of this Bill as they had excluded from the benefits of the previous Act, and from the Agricultural Acts, certain persons whose case was just as hard and whose case was absolutely indistinguishable from the case of those who were included in the scope of this Bill. The sense of irritation and injustice, which was always the result of exclusion and inclusion in this arbitrary manner, would continue a long time. In the sweated women's industries, such as the tailoring and shirt and collar trades, outwork was extending very fast; and although not specially subject to accidents there were some accidents to which the workers were liable. The exclusion of these was peculiarly hard, and one from which he thought on consideration the House would shrink. In this case and in that of the small workshops the exclusion was made because the Government were not prepared to make that breach in old traditions which every other country in Europe had made. If it were not too late he would add his voice to the appeal already made in favour of a complete assurance of every individual worker of every trade of the compensation which the House had intended him to have, and of which he was often deprived now by the mere operation of the law.

*MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that as a director of one of the large mutual indemnity companies perhaps the House would allow him to say a few words from their point of view. They all knew that the object of the Act of 1897 was to grant compensation for accident without proof of negligence, that another object was to provide machinery by which compensation could be arrived at without resort to law courts. That machinery had been entirely successful. During the year ending June last 349 claims came on the fund of the company in which he was interested, and of that number they settled 341 without litigation, generally through the Trade Union officials, who preferred dealing with the company rather than individual employers. The Government's proposals with regard to a medical referee would be a valuable improvement of the law, which on that point was at present a dead letter. He could only be called in at present by the county court judge after he had heard the evidence of both parties, and naturally the judge preferred to give his decision on the evidence which he had heard himself; the consequence being that the medical referees had not been required at all, and had been practically useless. The proposal now was that the medical referees should be public officials and should be called in as soon as possible, so as to avoid litigation. If that were done he felt that it would be a most admirable improvement of the present law. With regard to the burden of the Act, he thought there could be no doubt that the largest burden had fallen upon the coal trade. The large coal fields were unfortunately liable to accidents day by day. In Yorkshire they had an output of nearly 20,000,000 of tons per year, and they had paid in the seven years, ending June last, over £220,000 in compensation, but they could not tell what the full liability would be until the permanent cases, namely, those which lasted for more than six months, assumed their normal figures. In 1899–1900 they had fifty-six of these permanent cases, for which they paid £2,800; last year, ending June, the permanent cases had increased to 349 and the payment to over £22,000. Until the period arrived when the increase stopped it was therefore impossible to say what the permanent liability would be. He should like to point out that the decision to reduce from a fortnight to a week the period before the elapse of which no compensation was payable was against the recommendation of the Committee. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman knew that Messrs. Armstrong, at Elswick, before the Act of 1897 came into operation, had a scheme by which workmen drew benefit after being disabled for three days, and the number of men disabled over three days was 12·3 per cent. per annum for the five years ending 1897. When the Act came into force they naturally dropped their private scheme, and the number of men disabled for over three days was reduced to 2·9 per cent. per annum for the five years ending 1903. That was some little evidence to show that if the period were reduced there would be a larger number of claims to be dealt with. With regard to industrial diseases, the Committee in their Report advised that such diseases should be provided for by a system of insurance. He quite agreed that those cases should receive compensation, but it would have been better if that had not been provided for under this Bill which referred entirely to accidents, as a disease could not be called an accident. However, the Government had no doubt come to their decision. Hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House would give the Bill their best consideration. With regard to old and infirm men, he was inclined to allow them to be compensated at a lower rate by agreement.

MR. J. WARD: Why?

*MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: Because they were much more liable to be disabled permanently. The old men were suffering on account of this system because employers and insurance companies would not take the risk. The hon. Member for South Durham in his evidence before the Committee declared that he had no hesitation in saying that a very large number of the men discharged from the mines would not have been discharged had it not been for the Compensation Act. The object of the Government was to try and meet this case instead of the men being discharged. He hoped when the Bill was in Committee the Government would be prepared to listen to any reasonable Amendments put forward by the Mining Association of Great Britain and by others interested in this important question.

*MR. E. EDWARDS (Hanley) desired to call attention to one phase of the question which had not been touched in the speech of the Home Secretary and that was the attitude of the Government towards the contracting-out clause.

Whilst fully sympathising with the right hon. Gentleman's view of this Bill and the great effort he was making to give the country an improved Workmen's Compensation Act, nevertheless it was the business of Labour Members to call attention to the position of the workers after some seven or eight years' experience of the Act now in force. His hon. friend opposite, the Member for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow, had paid a well-deserved compliment to the promoters of the Bill of seven or eight years ago, but he was not sure whether he had realised all the difficulties which some of them had realised, especially in regard to the great amount of litigation which had fallen upon them. If the Home Secretary, in his effort to consolidate this legislation, could give them a measure which would be free from litigation it would bring great credit to himself and to the House as well. He happened to be the chairman of a great union which, since the operation of the Act, at almost every executive meeting had been face to face with appeal cases, and they had been obliged to spend large sums of money in order to find out what the law was. He did not know whether the present House of Commons, having in it so many lawyers, would be able to improve matters in this respect. He remembered that the late Home Secretary, Sir Matthew White Ridley, once suggested to a deputation in regard to a rather important case that he would like the workmen to take it to the Appeal Court to find out what the law was. And so they did, and it cost them a great deal. They paid a very heavy price for finding out the law, and a great many men who did not belong to any trade unions had secured the advantage. The unions had also paid for what he thought it should have been the duty of the Home Office to find out for themselves. He gathered that this Bill was much on the lines of the measure brought in by the late Home Secretary. The Miners' Federation generally, with the men in Durham and Northumberland, offered their strongest protest against any Bill which did not pay from the commencement of the accident. Many things were said about the Workmen's Compensation Act at the time it was introduced as to the enormous cost it would entail upon employers, but the fears had proved absolutely groundless. It was said on both sides of the House at that time that it would cost 3d., 6d., and in some cases as much as 10d. per ton, but now they had been told that the cost was less than 1d. per ton. In all great conciliation schemes the factor of the cost of production was always brought prominently forward, but now they would see that it did not fall upon the colliery proprietor but upon the workman himself. He wished to emphasise this point, because the great mass of the mining community were not the malingerers they were said to be. The friendly societies paid a man if he was off work for only a week. Passing through a time of bad trade, a man might only be working two or three days a week and consequently his compensation would be very small indeed. It was time that clause was amended, and if they were to have an amending Act they would rather wait this year and even next year in order to get a much stronger Act than to start off with seven days. The other point with which he wished to deal concerned the question of contracting out. If the two parties to a bargain were equal, there might be some force in contracting out, but experience in the operation of the clause had taught them that whatever in the judgment of the registrar was thought to be the right reading of the Act was forced on them, regardless of the view of the men. He offered their protest against this. If a contracting-out clause was allowed to remain it should carry with it the right of the workmen to be consulted in any arrangement which was come to. But the workers would prefer that the clause should be left out altogether, and, having had a long experience, he wished to emphasise that point. Fortunately, explosions were not so frequent as formerly, but a disaster on a great scale would shake eight-tenths of the firms to their foundation, and some of them would prefer to go into the bankruptcy court rather than face their claims. It might be, therefore, that after all it was to the interest of the State itself that there should be some compulsory measure of insurance, not for small people alone, but for much larger interests also. Some colliery people had decided to insure among themselves, and so far as they knew they had met the claims against them honourably. He hoped, in view of their importance, that the Home Secretary would give the House satisfactory assurances on these points, namely, that there should be no contracting out, and that those who met with accidents should get payment from the date of the injury. Everyone would re-echo the wish that had been expressed that the Act should work smoothly apart from either solicitors or medical men. But the workers had found that they were bound to take into account the solicitor and the medical man. They objected to a medical referee, as now understood, being the final authority. If they were to have him as a final authority, let him be a paid servant of the State, and then the workman would have some confidence in his decision. The members of the medical profession had used strong language in the columns of their medical journals condemning working men as lazy and indifferent, and any medical man who stooped to write such articles about working men was not a fit person to be a referee. The right hon. Gentleman had their warmest sympathy in regard to this Bill, but in the interests of a great organisation they desired certain Amendments.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) asked whether a man who was engaged in other work, such as delivering goods, met with an accident would he be entitled to compensation if it was not his ordinary work.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): Yes, that case would be included.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON said he wished to know also whether gamekeepers would come under the Act. They were peculiarly liable to accident in many ways. He should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on avoiding the pitfall of slovenly drafting and on making the Bill a consolidating measure instead of legislating by reference.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said he recognised that the Government had in the Workmen's Compensation Bill brought forward a very important measure, and he thanked them for having had the courage to include seamen within its scope. After all, it was only an act of justice which he had for a long time advocated, and he was pleased that at last there was a ray of hope and sunshine for the seamen in this matter. They were included in the right way. Compensation for seamen would only commence when they were landed in this country. Up to the time they landed here the shipowners had to provide for them. That placed the seaman in the same position as the working man on shore. He thought it would be found that there would be no great difficulty in applying the Act to seamen.

*MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said he wanted to ask a question about the fortnight's exemption from liability on the part of the employers. It had always seemed to him that there was no real reason why this fortnight adopted as a bar to cases of malingering should be deducted in the case of serious accident which was clearly proved. He suggested that whether they reduced the period to three days, as had been suggested by the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow or not, at all events they should provide that those who had suffered from serious accident should not suffer any reduction whatever. There had never been any reason in common sense for it. One other thing seemed to him to be a great omission, and one to which his attention had been drawn in connection with the people in his own employ, namely, the difficulty of establishing the case on the part of the worker, not only against any particular employer, but against the trained experts of the insurance companies, who were generally the defendants in such actions. In regard to members of large trade unions, they had their trade union secretaries to defend them, but that was an obligation which should not be put on trade unions. If Parliament established the moral right of an employee to compensation, the State should see that the poor and very often ignorant employee should be something more on a level with the parties against whom he had to make claims than the employee usually was. He certainly thought that a very simple scheme might be set up under this Bill, something similar to that of the medical referee, some person appointed in the public interest, who would take up and investigate claims in order that there should be no bogus claims or trivial claims put forward. There should be some deposit made by the claimant, say 5s. or 10s., as an earnest of good faith. He himself, as an employer, who was insured against employer's liability, had over and over again remarked how, under present conditions, the employee was liable to be taken advantage of, or something like it. There should be no unfairness. Just imagine Jack Tar home from a voyage, or an agricultural labourer, having to put in a claim! He knew this to be a practical difficulty, and he urged the Home Secretary to adopt some practical solution. Another point in carrying out legislation of this kind was the invidious distinction which the Bill made. That led him to the conclusion that they would have to come to some system of State insurance. That was the only logical conclusion which would get rid of unnecessary expense and unnecessary distinctions. Why should the employees of the small employer not be protected? Why had the right hon. Gentleman abandoned hope of protecting this class? He had given a reason which was no doubt to some extent valid, but it seemed to him that these people had just as good a moral right to protection as the employees of larger employers. He did not know what public policy there could be in making this distinction, nor did he know why it should be more difficult to insure the employees of small employers in towns than in the country. Agricultural labourers in small numbers were not exempt. He asserted that the difficulty of looking after the claims of agricultural labourers was just as great as the difficulty of looking after the others. There was no predilection on his part for collectivism. He did not want to put on the State any more than he could help, but in this great question of compensation of workmen it did seem to him that it was the State alone that could effectively cope with it. There was one objection behind State action. He believed that the principle of State insurance did not tend to further security of life and limb. That was the fault of State insurance as well as private insurance, and he had no doubt that the Home Secretary was quite right when he said that they must look for further security to more stringent factories and mines regulations where life and limb were concerned. He hoped the Home Secretary would kindly bear this point in mind on further consideration of the Bill. He was a bold man indeed, but he had earned the gratitude of both employer and employed when he proposed to make his Bill a Consolidating Act. They knew what a great benefit the Consolidated Factories Act of the late Mr. Ritchie conferred, and he was sure that the present Government in running the risk of a great many points of discussion had earned the gratitude of everybody. He hoped that those who might desire to impede the progress of the Bill for Party purposes would refrain from raising such points, and that as the Liberal Members helped the progress of the Factory Act the Conservative Members would return the compliment and help the House to make a good Consolidated Workmen's Compensation Act.

*MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said he wished to join in congratulating his right hon. friend on the introduction of this measure, which had been received with a chorus of approval. The hon. Member for Middlesbrough had in a great measure secured what he had been endeavouring to secure for the last eight or ten years in regard to seamen. He, like the hon. Member, saw a ray of hope with reference to an amendment of the law which he had during the same period been endeavouring to secure. He was glad that those unfortunate people who were employed in workshops were at last going to receive the benefits of this legislation. He pressed for their inclusion in the Act of 1897, but the Government of the day did not see their way to include them. He wished to refer to two points. One was the exclusion of workshops where only five men or under were employed, and the other was the limitation to which the hon. Member for the Radcliffe Division had just alluded. He saw no ground for excluding shop assistants from the scope of the Bill. There were a great many departments in which shop assistants were engaged. He did not know whether warehousemen would, in law, be regarded as shop assistants; but there were a great many occasions in which shop assistants were employed in warehouse work, and who would be deprived of the benefit of the Act. Hoists, for instance, were a most fruitful source of accident, and one constantly read of the most distressing cases of bodily injury from such machinery. Then, it was known what great risks had to be run by the assistants who sold petrol. He had been very much disappointed at the limitation to workshops where five persons were employed. That was really an adaptation of one of the worst features of the whole industrial system; and it was known how that had been disastrous to the health and safety of the workers in the small exempted laundries. He joined in the appeal so eloquently made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, who urged some form of compulsory insurance. The very admirable memorandum by Sir Kenelm Digby on the practice of foreign countries in regard to particular forms of insurance had been referred to by the hon. Member for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow. He regretted that Sir Kenelm Digby had dealt more particularly with Germany, for he thought the conditions of the system there were not so applicable to this country as that which obtained in France. The limitation to five persons was wholly unnecessary. Why not have a scheme of grouping the trades and inducing the small employers to join together to pay compensation to their servants? That system had been tried in the Potteries, and was acting admirably. It might be true that persons who had been inoculated in the early stages with poison, and who had started on the down grade in health, might not easily get employment; it was also true that if there was a scheme of insurance of that kind mentioned, it might be perfectly possible to include small workshops with less than five; and there was no reason at all for excluding shop assistants. He wished to thank the Government most cordially for including in the scheme of compensation workpeople who had been injured in their health. That was only an act of justice to a large number of industrial soldiers who had fallen out by the way. The Home Office proposed to apply these provisions to anthrax, lead poisoning, mercurial poisoning, arsenical poisoning, miners' disease; he hoped they would also include poisoning from carbon sulphides, chemicals and explosives where di-nitro-benzole was used, etc. There were dangers attending such trades as bronzing, paper-staining, millstone chipping, and india-rubber manufacture, and he hoped that these would be scheduled by the Home Secretary as dangerous for the purposes of this particular compensation Act. Those details, however, were more fitted to be dealt with in the Committee stage, and he would not labour them, but would conclude by once more expressing his gratitude to the right hon. the Home Secretary for the measure which he had introduced.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said that the right hon. the Home Secretary had stated that he would welcome any suggestion for the improvement of the Bill. Now, he was in favour of the Bill, but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be strong enough to include in its scope shop assistants. He had been more than surprised when he found that the right hon. Gentleman, after all the Liberal promises which had been made during the recent General Election, was prepared to perpetuate the very vicious system of differentiating between workmen and workmen. There were, in his opinion, only two classes—the worker and the idler; and all workers should come under any Compensation Bill passed by this Liberal Government. He believed he was the only man in the House who had first-hand experience of the changes that had taken place of late years in the distributive trade. Few people in the sphere of Members of this House had any conception of these enormous changes in the shops—changes almost as violent as in the manufactories of the country. Take the case of the grocery trade. It had become almost an engineering business. There were machines for weighing sugar, machines for parcelling, and machines for putting up provisions. In fact, if more machines were to be adopted in grocery stores the shop assistants would have to be skilled engineers. Then there were the great emporiums, not only in London, but in all the large towns throughout the country. There were in these emporiums not only hoists to be worked, but there were dark, subterranean passages which neither customers nor inspectors ever saw, in which many accidents happened to shop assistants at the present time. With his practical experience of all these dangers, he wished to see abolished the vicious system of making any difference between the classes of the working people of the country. He pleaded with the right hon. Gentleman to bring the shop assistants, who numbered at least 250,000, within the scope of the Bill.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) said he was very glad that there was only one note of opposition raised to the very excellent measure now before the House. The hon. Member for one of the divisions of Sheffield raised the question of the great cost which this measure would cast upon the employers. That should not stand in the way with us. It must be remembered that the profits which accrued to employers, as revealed in the income tax returns, were always swelling in a satisfactory way, while that was not the case with the manual workers of the country, who were chiefly concerned in the Bill under discussion. He particularly welcomed the extension of the provisions of the Act to cases of industrial disease. It had already been ruled that anthrax came within the provisions of the existing law. If it had been decided that the introduction into the human body of the bacillus of anthrax constituted an accident they could hardly refuse to go further and say that when lead settled in the human frame that also constituted an accident. If the results of an organic disease like anthrax should be compensated, non-organic but equally distressing diseases like lead colic and phossy jaw could hardly be excluded. The Home Secretary could hardly fail to be impressed by the fact that most Members were in favour of universal compensation accompanied by compulsory insurance. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman himself favoured that solution of the problem, and he hoped that in the not distant future the present measure, excellent as it was, would be extended by the application of that principle. In the meantime he thought it hardly necessary that the Bill should make exceptions both as to numbers and as to trades. If the measure excepted the small employer, whether shopkeeper or manufacturer, that should be sufficient without excepting certain trades and clerks, shop-assistants, and domestic servants. He hoped the Home Secretary would on Committee stage accept an Amendment to that effect. With regard to agriculture, also, there was a danger lest the exception of farmers who did not employ one labourer permanently should lead the small farmer to do without permanent hands, and therefore avoid the provisions of the Act. But whatever was done in regard to compensating workmen, he hoped it would be remembered that there were industrial diseases like consumption which could not be brought under the Act, though arising from the conditions of employment; and he hoped that there would be no relaxation in the inspection of factories, and in other forms of protection for those who chiefly bore the heat and burden of the day.

*MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) thought the Home Secretary had every reason to be content with the general tone of the criticism of his Bill, and he hoped that the remarks he should make would prove no exception to the rule. There were one or two points which they must bear in mind in considering a question of this kind. They must not only endeavour to secure a fair remuneration for the workers, but also have regard to security of life and limb. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1897 laid great stress upon that. He had hoped that his right hon. friend would have found some other means than were contained in this Bill for carrying so desirable an object into effect. The other point was what amount of compensation could be considered fair. One could never really actually compensate a man for any serious injury, say the loss of an eye, an arm or a limb, and where a man lost his life no amount of solatium given to those dependent upon him could entirely compensate them. It was necesssary, especially in the case of widows and young persons, that the amount of compensation recovered should be invested so that the interest should not be wasted and should pass into the proper hands. No doubt in the case of the injured man he must bear some part of the cost and burden resulting from an accident in the way of ill-health, and he thought they could all sympathise with him. And it was their duty so far as they could to lighten that burden as far as was just and equitable in the interests of the country generally.

The hon. Member for North Paddington seemed to think that all employers were wealthy persons, and that all this House had to do was to place the burden upon them and that they could bear it. But that was not the case, and many who would come within the provisions of this Bill would be exceedingly poor men. However sympathetic, therefore, they might be with workmen they must not place too large a burden upon the man who was only just above the workman, as this meant that in the case of any serious accident they would make the small employer bankrupt, and the workman would get no compensation at all. The right hon. Gentleman having said that some 25 per cent. of these small employers were not insured, there seemed room for some general scheme of compensation to which contributions might be made from some source other than from the employers and the men. The general sketch of the Bill given by the right hon. Gentleman showed that it was not lacking in amplitude. The right hon. Gentleman intended to include all those employers who employed five men and upwards, and that large increase in the scope of the Bill might place some obstacle in the way of its steady passage into law. The Party of which he was a Member had always been favourable to the fuller extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act, but it was desirable to move cautiously. There was a strong feeling in some quarters against Workmen's Compensation being applied indiscriminately to all trades, and the right hon. Gentleman proposed to reverse the practice of his predecessors, and at one stroke to include all trades with certain exceptions. He proposed only to exclude police, shopkeepers, clerks and some others. The right hon. Gentleman said nothing about the Naval and Military services of the Crown. He did not, moreover, know why the policeman should be excluded upon the argument, which had been adduced, that it was desirable to widely extend the Act. The same observation would apply to the other classes whom the right hon. Gentleman intended to exclude from the benefit of the measure. It was a happy result that after nine years experience both Parties had agreed to endorse the principle then laid down by extending the scope of the Act, and remedying the defects that had been found to exist. In the past there had everywhere been an unnecessary amount of litigation, and Scotland had been a great offender in that matter. In some cases the heavy costs had altogether exceeded the amount of the compensation awarded. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman had considered that matter, and that this Bill would result in less litigation and a bigger fund for the benefit of sufferers. With regard to the provision for the reduction of the fourteen days, the Act of 1897 provided that an employer should not be responsible under the Act unless a man was prevented from working for fourteen days. That was a most important provision. The Departmental Committee expressed the opinion that—

> "Practical considerations such as are indicated in the evidence above quoted makes us altogether, apart from the question of principle, reluctant to propose any interference with the existing provision."

There were also many expressions of opinion in the House at the time that Act was before it. One hon. Member when the Act of 1897 was under discussion was in favour of extending the period of fourteen days to one month. That hon. Member was now the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury. He (Mr. Cochrane) did not know what action the hon. Gentleman proposed to take now. Then the consideration of costs came in. Undoubtedly there would be an alarming addition to the costs because, as Mr. Brabrook, the late Registrar of Friendly Societies, pointed out, the amount paid in respect of the first two weeks was 63¾ per cent. of the amount paid after two weeks, whilst insurance companies estimated that the amount paid in respect of the first week was from 25 to 50 per cent. Their duty was to point out these facts to the right hon. Gentleman and point to the weighty expressions of opinion that appeared in the Blue-book, and to express the hope that he had acquainted himself with those expressions of opinion, and had been guided by new facts that might have arisen since the date of the issue of the Report of the Departmental Committee in proposing this reduction, the responsibility for which rested on the right hon. Gentleman. Then as to the inclusion of diseases. Every one felt that injury which arose from a disease contracted through a particular occupation was as serious in its consequences to a man and his family as any other accident, but there was some difficulty in dealing with such cases under this Bill. An accident must arise "out of" as well as "in the course of their employment by him." The right hon. Gentleman said that he was going to throw upon the employers a collective responsibility, but it would be very difficult to do so and to determine whether a disease was inherited, whether it was contracted before the employment, or whether it was contracted at home. One of the greatest difficulties would occur in the case of lead poisoning, where a man having suffered from lead poisoning had recovered and applied again for work. If such a man had the least sign of blue round his gums, he would not be again employed, as lead poisoning being latent in his system might appear in an aggravated form and the immediate employer would find it very hard to prove that the illness was not contracted in his employ. He thought the best way to deal with cases of that kind would be to make the whole trade responsible, and not to pass the responsibility on from one employer to another. The hon. Member for North Paddington had said that anthrax had been held to be an accident, but in that case the ruling of the Judge was certainly not a general ruling. The general rule was expressed by the Court of Appeal, which laid down the principle that—

> "An injury can only be said to be an accident if it can be ascribed to a particular place and a particular date, and if it can be regarded as an accident in the popular and ordinary sense of the word."

Such accidents as lead poisoning could only lead to litigation, and were not suitable for inclusion in this Bill. He welcomed the provision dealing with the aged and infirm and the provision by which an employer might contract to give a reasonable and fair sum to persons injured in some previous employment. The clause dealing with the seamen was a very important one. The men the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to include were an important class, and their case was one which excited the sympathy of every Member of the House. They recognised that these men were only partially covered by the Merchant Shipping Act, but, here again, he thought special legislation was required. Let them take the case where a ship was in distress and another ship came to her assistance and a boat was lowered and lost. What would be the view in the mind of the ship's captain who had to report that a serious accident had taken place resulting in the loss of two or three lives? It appeared to him they were placing a great responsibility upon such a man and making it very difficult for him to carry out what they all considered was the highest duty of man, namely, to go to the assistance of another in distress. There must be some special legislation to deal with that point and the State might well be called in to bear a part of the loss incurred in such circumstances. Were fishermen to be included? They were not included in the Bill introduced by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1893. He felt, and a great many would feel, that they were placing a great burden on the owner of a boat, who was often a partner of the men who formed his crew, if they made him responsible for all the accidents that befell those with whom he was working. There was no reason why they should not be compensated, but there must be special legislation to that end. The only other observation he had to make was as to the scope of the Bill. The Bill of last year would have included, an addition of a million workmen, and an indefinite addition was to be made to that number. He again pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman the warning of the Departmental Committee, who said on page 314 of their Report—

> "What seems to us important is that no considerable addition beyond what we have recommended should be made to the classes at present receiving the benefit of the Act without full inquiry into the circumstances of the particular employment, with a view of ascertaining whether the extension is needed, whether it will work effectively, and whether any special provisions or conditions are required or desirable."

Had the right hon. Gentleman had the opportunity of making full and exhaustive inquiry before making proposals to add so many to the schedules of those who were in future to come under the Act? He feared that the right hon. Gentleman had not had sufficient leisure since succeeding to office and it was therefore all the more necessary that he should give the House the fullest opportunities for freely discussing the Bill. They on that side of the House had always been sympathetic to the objects aimed at by the Bill and towards all proposals for giving greater security and adequate compensation to the workmen and for avoiding litigation, and he thought he might assure the right hon. Gentleman that he might rely on the criticisms of those on that side of the House being of a perfectly fair and not of an unfriendly character.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields) said the hon. Gentleman was perfectly entitled to make the claim which he had just made on behalf of the Party to which he belonged. He and those associated with him had been and were always willing to consider in a sympathetic spirit measures of the class to which this Bill belonged. The hon. Gentleman's Party was honourably associated with, and might claim the principal place in the initiation of, legislation of this particular character. Though it was not very satisfactory to conduct anything in the nature of a general discussion on a Bill which was not in the hands of hon. Members, one or two points had been raised in the debate upon which he thought some observations might be made. Special reference had been made to the limit of five which appeared in the Bill. The House would understand that the Bill applied to all employments except the excepted employments, which were not many in number and which did not include the class generally understood as workmen. It not only covered all employed, but it also covered all persons employed in those trades which had been generally understood to be more or less dangerous trades. The limit of five did not apply to cases where machinery was used. That would cover the case of the shop assistant employed on a lift.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is the right hon. Gentleman quite sure that the Judges of the Court of Appeal would interpret the Act in that sense?

SIR W. ROBSON said perhaps he was wrong in using the term shop assistant. At all events those working lifts or machinery and who were workmen would undoubtedly be included within the terms of the Act. That was a very wide extension of the benefits of the Act. The same observation applied to those who where engaged in building operations, in mining or in quarries, and in laying electric lines or works. The limitation of five applied to other employments. All the dangerous trades, practically, were included in the Bill. There were many trades which were not absolutely dangerous, in which there were small risks and small premiums. But, when they got to the small employers in those trades, they got the small risk but by no means the small premium. The insurance companies, in those cases, insisted on a minimum premium. In farming, for instance, where the risk was small, the premium ranged from 7s. 6d. to 10s. per cent., which represented ten or a dozen times the risk. The result would be that the small employer in a non-dangerous trade would not be insured, and that, if they were to take him into the Bill, they would be conferring on the workmen in that trade an illusory benefit. These small employers were, in truth, nothing but fellow workmen. Suppose, in the case of the village bootmaker, the apprentice who was sent with a pair of boots to a customer was injured in the course of delivering the goods by some accident in the road. Then this small trader might be called upon to pay the sum of 10s. a week, it might be for life, to a man who was very little removed in commercial and manufacturing *status* from himself. The Government had to consider that. Hon. Members might be quite certain that those who had framed the Bill considered every one of these cases in a most sympathetic spirit. They had considered them with no desire to make exclusions, but in a spirit desirous of making every inclusion that was possible, and they had come to the conclusion that it would not be desirable to include small employers to whom the whole principle of personal liability for workmen's compensation was inappropriate, because they were, in fact, workmen themselves. It had been suggested that the men thus employed should have some means of deriving equal benefits with their fellow-workmen by some other machinery than that which was provided by this Bill. That was a very fair matter for consideration, which was not excluded by the Bill. The Government did no prevent that further extension of this legislation by their proposals. On the contrary, they led the House and the country up to it. The experience of the working of the Bill among small employers in dangerous trades would greatly help and guide those who desired to make a still further extension of the principle to workmen in non-dangerous trades. As to State insurance, the Government were certainly not desirous of encumbering this Bill, already of dimensions dangerously great, with a proposal so disputable as that. No doubt his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean would raise the question in Committee, but he was not sure that it was an exactly accurate statement of the facts to say, as his right hon. friend had said; that England was behind every country in Europe in legislation of this kind. There was a sound and substantial reason for limiting at present the benefits of such legislation. The limitations were very small indeed compared with the enormous extensions.

Mr. THORNE (West Ham, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that thousands of carmen will be shut out of this Bill?

Sir W. ROBSON said that was dealt with already under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. JENKINS (Chatham) asked if two men working on board a ship scheduled as a factory would be excluded from the operation of the Act.

Sir W. ROBSON thought such a case would come under the provisions of the Act. Something had been said with regard to out-workers, and he was desirous that the word should be used in its proper sense. What they meant by an out-worker was a person to whom work was given to do at his own house, where he was not under the control of the master at all, and to whom the whole machinery of the Act was inapplicable. That was the kind of out-worker who was excluded. With regard to industrial diseases, the provisions of the Bill were of a limited class, one might say of an experimental class. They did not by any means attempt to define industrial disease in general; they only specified certain diseases which were known to arise from particular causes which could be easily traced and identified, and as to which they could also form a very fair estimate of the time when they arose. Those carefully specified diseases were made the subject of compensation as if they were accidents, because they were nearly all cases very much like accidents. With regard to seamen, for long it had been recognised that they ought to be included within the provisions of some Act of this kind, and the reason advanced for their exclusion ought rather to have been a paramount reason for their inclusion—namely, that accidents were so common in that employment that the premium would be too serious for the masters to incur. He thought that was now an exploded idea. He had had the honour as a private Member of proposing a measure for the inclusion of seamen in such benefits, and that was laid before the ship owners and met with very general agreement. As far as the shipbuilding trade was concerned, he believed they did not look with any special dislike on the inclusion of seamen. No doubt in Committee details would be dealt with which it was not convenient to discuss at the present stage, but he thought that they might now agree on the principle of the Bill. He suggested that the Motion before the House should be amended as follows, since the Bill was also a consolidating measure—

> "Bill to consolidate and amend the law with respect to compensation to workmen for injury suffered in the course of their employment."

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.), who was indistinctly heard, said he quite appreciated the reasonableness of the appeal made by the hon. and learned Gentleman that they should not go into very great detail as to the innumerable cases which might arise under this Act until, at all events, the full text was before them. In the case of similar Bills he knew how easy it was to misunderstand, and how time was wasted by not deferring consideration for a period. At the same time, in a matter of this sort, where the interest was so universal, it was very desirable to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the First Reading to get a clear and distinct understanding as to the main provisions of the Bill. He himself in previous years had taken a very great personal interest in this subject. His hon. friend the Member for North Ayrshire had said with great truth that on that side of the House there certainly could not be any objection to the principle of the Bill, which was, if he might put it shortly, to extend the advantages of the Workmen's Compensation Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had said that in a matter of this kind it was wise to proceed step by step, and had objected to encumber such an Act with proposals which might come at a subsequent time, and which would introduce considerable matter for discussion, such as that for State insurance. He entirely agreed, and would point out that this principle of compensation was one of the charges which properly belonged to the trade in which the accident took place. When the principle was first introduced in 1892 there was still more reason why those who were answerable for such a novelty should limit considerably its immediate application. He thought it would be found by reference to the debates of that time that his friend the late Lord Ridley, then Home Secretary, and he himself, in speaking on this subject, while protesting against any attempt to overload the Bill at that moment, and considering it as an experiment, nevertheless showed very clearly their own wish and desire that it should be largely extended if it proved to be, as they thought it would, a very great success. Speaking for himself, there was hardly any extension of it which he would not welcome. The first remark he had to make with regard to some of the exclusions was that even now he did not quite understand them. He understood from what had been said at an earlier period that the Bill excepted employments in which not more than five persons were engaged. But, if he had followed the hon. and learned Gentleman, another condition of exemption was made—namely, that there was no machinery.

*MR. GLADSTONE said that in the clause which governed the exclusions there were certain limitations. There was liability for compensation where the accident was attributable to the use by the employer of machinery driven by steam, water, or other mechanical power, or where a workman at the time of the accident had the care or management of a horse, or was engaged in mining or quarrying, or building operations, or laying or repairing any electric lines or works.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN confessed that he did not understand the principle of that. He himself would be inclined to include small shops. He could not quite see how they could fairly include a shop where there happened to be a lathe, as, for instance, a blacksmith's shop in a village, where there were less than five workpeople, while at the same time excluding a similar shop which had not a lathe but where a man might be injured by a hammer or by a hot iron. Was not such a case as that deserving of compensation? In excluding small workshops it was proposed to go a great deal further than he himself would like to go, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his position in regard to this matter. Then, again, for the life of him he could not understand why apparently a whole class, one of the most deserving in the country, was excluded—he meant clerks. There was no class with which he had more sympathy than clerks; they had to make a good appearance on very small means, they had to have a superior education, and he thought they certainly were deserving of the consideration that was shown to workmen. In many cases they took similar risks with workmen. He remembered an accident that happened in Birmingham—a boiler explosion, when the boiler was flung bodily by the explosion through the office, and serious injury was sustained by some of the clerks. On what possible ground in any such case could clerks be fairly excluded and workmen included? He hoped that when they came to the discussion of matters of detail clerks would be included. It has been strongly urged that domestic servants might be included in this Bill. He was in favour of including them. They might exclude very small houses. He knew by his own experience that insurance of domestic servants could be obtained at very small expense. With regard to seamen, he was not quite certain whether it was intended in the case of accidents on board ship to force the British owner to compensate alien seamen.

*MR. GLADSTONE: If an alien is in a British ship or in England he gets the benefit.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN thought that reasonable enough. He would proceed a step further. They were going to compensate the alien, and throw upon the English shipowner the expense of compensating not only British but alien seamen. There was a Shipping Bill before the House by which perhaps this subject might have been more satisfactorily dealt with. At all events, they were told that it was intended to equalise the conditions as between British and foreign shipping, and that they were going to force foreigners who came into our harbours to adopt the same precautions which were considered necessary in British ships. He thought that was perfectly fair. He hoped it would be remembered that there was a new obligation upon the British shipowner, and Parliament ought to enforce the same obligation to insure their seamen on the owners of foreign ships coming into our harbours, and to take the same precautions with regard to life. These were points to which he wished to direct attention at this early period. Questions of the greatest importance affecting enormous numbers of workmen would necessarily come up in the discussions on this Bill, and he presumed that the measure would be dealt with by Committee of the Whole House, and that there would be no attempt to take the Committee stage out of the control of the House. He said that with all friendship to the Bill, because he was not certain that by taking it upstairs they would prevent the House at subsequent stages from giving great attention to the details It would not be so convenient to deal with the details of the measure in that way as in Committee of the Whole House. There was no desire to obstruct the Bill in any part of the House. But, in regard to the time before the demand for compensation should commence to be paid, he would press the representatives of the working men, both inside and outside the House, to consider very carefully whether a provision which at first sight might appear to be to the advantage of the workmen, might not ultimately be not so much to the disadvantage of the manufacturer or the employer, as to the workman himself. They should not desire to press on the employer any expenditure which was not clearly in the interest of the workmen; because, after all, whatever political economists might say on the subject, they all knew that one of the factors in wages was the expense of production, and if the expense of production was raised beyond certain limits by legislation, it was conceivable that some part of that charge might be transferred by the employer on to the workmen. Before the Bill of 1897 was introduced he consulted a large number of people acquainted with the principles of compensation insurance, some of the principal officials of the great friendly and benefit societies in this country, and representatives of insurance companies. They all pressed upon him that in the interests of the workman, as well as of the employer, a distinct and definite period should lapse before compensation was payable. The reason was that, after all, there was no great pressure for compensation where the accident was so slight as to be represented by no more than a fortnight's illness. In the second place, it was found by some of the friendly societies necessary to protect themselves by a delay before compensation became payable, in order to prevent fraud. He asked whether it was worth while putting 50 per cent. more expense upon the employer in order merely to get compensation for the first fortnight's absence from work. He urged the representatives of the workmen to consider whether it was in their interests to press for an alteration in the law which would be found to be extremely unpopular and would place an increased charge on employers everywhere. When the Bill of 1897 was before the House he had returns furnished to him of the number of accidents which took place in every great trade in the country, and calculations were deduced from these returns as to what the operation of the Bill would cost. At the time he believed that the statements made by the opponents of the Bill as to its cost were greatly exaggerated, and that had been proved to be the case, because after some years experience of the working of the Act it was found that his original calculations were absolutely correct. He was informed that of late years there had been a considerable increase in the number of accidents. Why was that? [An HON. MEMBER on the LABOUR Benches: Speeding up the machinery.] Well, if speeding up machinery had taken place, with the result of an increase in the number of accidents, then he for one was glad that means were provided for compensation. If the House reduced the close period, as it had been called, to seven days, he thought they would open the way to a great deal more litigation, and to that extent they would injure rather than benefit the working classes.

*MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) recognised the appeal which had been made that the House should not treat this as a Second Reading debate. He wished, however, to make a few remarks in regard to the last point made by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken. Under the last Compensation Act several classes of workers were deprived of its benefits, and were thus seriously injured. He could not see why in serious accidents compensation should not be payable during the first week following an accident, and he put it to the Home Secretary that he would confer a greater benefit upon the working classes if he would make compensation date from the time when the accident took place rather than by altering the qualifying period. He did not think that by this means they would increase the claims which would be made under the Bill, or in any way bring it into disrepute. The Home Secretary had spoken of this as a consolidating measure, but it included only the Compensation Acts of 1897 and 1902. He thought it might be possible to provide one measure which should include all the Employers' Liabilities Laws concerning the relations between workmen and employers, and that such a Bill was wanted by the country. He welcomed the present Bill, however, and would do all he could to support it.

MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said that trades unionists wanted a promise from the Home Secretary that he would make provision that no person at present included in the scope of the Acts should be excluded from the right to compensation by the Bill. Labour Members could not support a measure which would exclude some people who were now entitled to the benefits of the existing Compensation Acts. Since they had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham practically a member of the trades union group, they would get a good Bill.

MR. SPICER (Hackney, Central) said he was in favour of the inclusion of clerks, shop assistants, and domestic servants within the purview of the Bill. Domestic servants were of great assistance to us all, and it would be sheer ingratitude to exclude them from the Act. He was also unable to understand why clerks should be excluded. He thought that the learned Solicitor-General touched rather a lower key than the Home Secretary. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to say that the Bill had been built up by a recognition of dangerous trades. He maintained that the classes whose cause they advocated ran as much risk as those who worked in factories and workshops. Take the flat system, with its tenements and lifts. The servant ran as much risk there as in any factory.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill to consolidate and amend the law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Solicitor General, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the law with respect to Compensation to Workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 123].

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [6th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said that this Bill was similar to one which he had the honour to introduce in 1904. That Bill made considerable progress through the House, was passed successfully through the Grand Committee and its Report Stage, but unfortunately met with opposition from the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, and was thrown out on its Third Reading. He hoped the hon. Gentleman opposite would on this occasion be more successful. The provisions of the Police Act of 1890 were, on the whole, liberal so far as the policeman was concerned. That Act provided that a policeman who became incapacitated and who had not served fifteen years got a gratuity on a medical certificate. After fifteen years service, on a medical certificate as to infirmity of mind or body he got a pension. After twenty-five years service he was entitled to retire on a pension, and after twenty-six years service his pension was to be two-thirds of his pay. It was obvious to everybody that a policeman who had joined the force at twenty years of age might retire at the age of forty-six in the prime of his life, when he was seasoned to his duties and full of that experience without which the policeman's lot was not a happy one. The object of this Bill was to give a man some incentive to remain in the service a few years longer and thereby to improve the service and his own position. But the difficulty was that the policeman, having earned a pension, felt that for some trifling fault he might be discharged from the service and lose that pension, for which he had served for twenty-six years. He thought that if the pension was earmarked to the policeman so that if he served a few more years it would still be secure to him and that he would not lose it except he committed the very gravest offences, that difficulty might be got over. Again he had to complain of the action of the hon Member for Mid Lanark in this matter. The Scotch police had a much harder life than the English police, and they were not entitled to a pension of two-thirds of their pay until they had completed thirty-four years service and had reached the age of fifty-five. The Scottish police were as able as the police of this country; the climate in which they had to serve was not less inclement than that of England, and he certainly hoped that whatever little advantage might accrue to the police of this country through the passage of this Bill, would also be extended to the Scottish service. This Bill, he thought, would have a very great effect in raising the very heavy burden that fell upon the rates. In 1902, when the Act had only been in force sixteen years, the total expenditure for police pensions in England and Wales amounted to £434,737, which showed an annual excess of expenditure over income of £93,627. If to that was added London expenditure the total annual deficit came to £170,000. That showed a very serious state of affairs. The result of this Bill would be a smaller drain on the pension fund. No one wished to reduce the pensions of policemen; no one grudged them what they got, and he was sure that many men would be willing to serve if their pensions were made safe. This Bill was a permissive Bill, and went in the direction of giving that security of tenure which the police had not now got. One safeguard, and a very proper one, was provided in the Bill, and that was that a policeman before he was engaged in this way must be physically fit and must pass a medical inspection to show that he was fit. The Bill met generally with the approval of the police authorities and would, if passed, he believed, add to the efficiency of the force by keeping men of experience in it. The clause dealing with "discontinuous service" was fair and right, and the clause dealing with "approved service" extremely good. He was glad to be able to give the Bill his blessing.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said he had been asked by the chief constable of Sheffield to draw attention to a little grievance which was felt with regard to a few words in Section 4, Sub-section 4, of the Police Act of 1890. It was there provided that in cases where a police officer had been in more than one force, service of less than three years in any one force was not to count towards approved service. It could easily be imagined that police officers often remained in the force less than three years, and if they then changed into another force the whole of this service was lost. It was felt that a policeman ought to be allowed to count his continuous service, even if in one force he had been less than three years. He hoped the Secretary of State for the Home Department would consider the matter.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said this was a Bill more or less similar to one which was introduced by the late Secretary of State for the Home Department, and, whilst one approached this measure with sympathy, there were parts which did not invite support. In the first place, there could be no doubt that certain provisions would stop promotion in the police force throughout the country, and would be therefore unpopular among the younger members of the force. Another objection was that no provision was made in the Bill to make special payments count for pension. That question had for long been a grievance among the police, and the grievance was the more acute because when some of their superior officers received special allowances, they were allowed to count for pension. He earnestly hoped that those who represented the Home Office would give some undertaking that in Committee the provisions of the Bill would be extended to meet the objection he had raised. In the last two or three years there had been occasion to note the increasing number of duties performed by the police, involving better education, higher skill, and greater risk, and surely the time had come when competence in foreign languages should count for increased pay and increased pension. Take London for instance. Only the other day the Secretary of State for the Home Department, informed the House that 100 or 200 of the Metropolitan police had to acquire facility in the Yiddish language in order to discharge their duties in the London streets.

*Mr. SPEAKER said that question was not relevant to the Bill.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he was endeavouring to show how increased allowances ought to count towards pensions, which was not the case in the lower ranks of the police force. It was a grievance which was keenly felt by the general body of the police force, and at this season, when the Government was giving sympathetic ear to the claims of the different branches of the public service, he hoped the police would not be an exception to the rule. As a Scotchman he wished to enforce the appeal in respect of the police force in Scotland. It did seem very hard that if a man took employment in the police force north of the Tweed he should have to serve thirty-four years in a more rigorous climate, as compared with twenty-six years in the sunny south of England, before being entitled to a pension He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate the valuable services of these men by unifying the various rules and making the whole of the conditions of the service more popular.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir EDWARD CARSON asked if somebody would explain what the Bill was about.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said it was simply to extend existing regulations to places to which they did not now apply. He had not got a copy of the Bill with him.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY asked if he understood that though the right hon. Gentleman had not got a copy of the Bill with him he proposed to ask the House to read it a second time. He was bound to say that amongst many others he had not had an opportunity of studying the Bill. He begged to moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned." (*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON hoped the hon. Member would not persist in his Motion.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he did not know what the Bill was for.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said that that was not his fault; the Bill had been circulated for some time.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate lapsed without Question put.

And the debate on the Second Reading stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (ELECTRIC SUPPLY) BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster), in moving that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, said it was rather inconvenient on this occasion that those who supported the Second Reading of the Bill should have taken the course which had been taken, and which was not the usual course taken on the Second Reading of Private Bills. The subject with which the Bill dealt was of great public importance. It might have been useful if the House had received a suggestion from the representatives of the County Council as to the course they intended to pursue with reference to this question as a whole. The suggestion, however, had not yet been made, and therefore he could only suppose that the Council were carrying out what had been suggested outside this House, namely, their desire to pass this Bill and to oppose all other measures introduced into this House relating to the same subject. There were two courses open to the London County Council in this matter. The Council might either have adopted the course he had suggested, or they might have referred the whole question to a Select Committee or a Royal Commission in order that the scheme might be considered without prejudice, and with the view of some satisfactory conclusion being arrived at with which this House might have been asked to deal. The first course, however, was the one the County Council desired to take, and he wished to say at once that he considered the course most unfortunate and most unreasonable. There were two other considerations to which the attention of the House ought to be drawn. The scheme as suggested by the County Council was undoubtedly ill-prepared and showed an utter disregard of the financial considerations. It was, moreover, a scheme which partook largely of a speculative character, and was, therefore, in his opinion, not suited for the purposes of municipal enterprise. He suggested that the proposals which the County Council were making to-day were contrary to the understanding arrived at in 1882 and 1887. That argument was used successfully against the Administrative County of London Bill introduced last year, and would equally apply to this Bill. It appeared to him that the London County Council in the present Bill were, without justification, asking the House to break the arrangement come to in 1882 and 1887. The present scheme of the Council was to include not only the area for which they was responsible, but an area more than three times the size of the County Council area, including a considerable part of the counties which surround London, and containing 380 square miles. The area under the control of the County Council was one of 117 square miles. He doubted, indeed, whether the County Council looked upon this proposal of theirs as a serious matter of business. Personally he was inclined to think that the Council were anxious to gain a strategic position which would, in fact, give them a virtual monopoly—to exclude all private enterprise from the area sought to be covered by this scheme. In reciting the history of the Bill, and the curious and rapid changes of opinion on the part of the London County Council, he showed that last year, when the Administrative County of London Bill was introduced, the County Council in their petition denied that there was any public necessity for a scheme of this kind. When the measure went to the House of Lords the Council dropped that plea and asked Parliament to consider whether it was desirable that a monopoly should be conferred on a company seeking such large powers as those embodied in the Bill. Last November, however, the County Council admitted the necessity, but urged that the Council was the only body which should be entrusted with the carrying out of the scheme. Private enterprise having made the discovery that the supply of electricity in bulk was necessary for industrial purposes in the Metropolis, the London County Council now came forward with a demand to exclude all private enterprise. The course pursued by the London County Council was most unreasonable. The merits of the other two Bills on the Paper † were not to be considered at all. Only one scheme was to be considered and the whole future of the management of the supply of electricity in bulk in this large area was to be settled in principle in this debate. Whether hon. Gentleman opposite who supported private enterprise last year were now going to submit to the dictation of the London County Council he did not know, but if they were, then they would endorse the principle that private enterprise was for ever to be excluded from this area. With regard to the merits of this particular Bill, he believed that the scheme which the House was now considering was reckless in its character owing to its want of preparation and its lack of financial caution. What was the history of the Bill? When in November last the Highways Committee of the County Council brought forward a report suggesting that a Bill should be introduced, the Finance Committee viewed the proposal with a great deal of apprehension, and this view was strongly backed up by Sir F. Mowatt, who, however, was able subsequently to vote for the proposal of the Finance Committee. Later, however, the Finance Committee brought in a stronger report relating to some of the details of the scheme, and it was then said that there were practically no estimates on which the Council could base any idea of the cost to the ratepayers. They said—

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† Additional Electrical Power Supply (London) Bill. Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Bill.

> "We have had before us certain estimates of working costs and the probable growth of demand for electricity, but the figures are at present only of a provisional character, and we are advised that the publication of any estimates at the present stage might prejudice the Council's case before a Committee of Parliament. We are consequently placed in a position of difficulty, because while we feel that the Council ought to have before it some means of judging as to the financial prospects of the scheme, we are unable for the reasons stated to submit any figures to the Council."

Even so late as December last the committee were unable to submit any figures of importance to the Council, and he had reason to believe they were in no better position at the present time. Further, there was no proof that the Council were in a position to ensure successful competition. They said—

> "We cannot at present say whether the Council could supply at such low prices as would enable it to successfully compete for business with the large power and electric companies who possess powers of supply in bulk throughout a large part of the proposed area. This is, after all, the crucial question, because, as already pointed out, it does not appear that the Council will possess any monopoly, but will be mainly dependent for business, so far as we can see, upon its ability to sell at a price which would induce existing undertakers to take a supply from it."

A very good proof, if one were needed, that this business was entirely speculative in its character. A little later on the committee endeavoured to give some good advice to the County Council. They said—

> "The position which the Council will occupy in this matter has engaged our serious attention, and we cannot help thinking that the Council ought, before embarking capital in such an enterprise, to have some further security than it will apparently possess. We are not prepared at the moment to say what the nature of the security should be, but it would appear to lie in the direction of the Council making suitable and permanent arrangements with the existing undertakers."

That excellent advice, however, was not followed, and the committee finally said—

> "In conclusion, and looking to all the circumstances, we are impressed with the fact that financial risks are inseparable from an enterprise of this kind, covering so large an area, and that if such risks mature, the burden will fall entirely on the ratepayers of London."

That conclusion was backed up in even stronger language by Lord Welby, who seemed to have an indifferent opinion of the financial caution of a great many members of the council. Lord Welby said—

> "The policy by which the Council passed scheme after scheme was a strange one. In one year, the Council passed a scheme involving huge expenditure, put it aside, forgot all about it, and looked upon it as if the thing were done. The next year, fresh schemes were produced, and the process repeated. In view of the change of Government, London County Council Bills promoted by the Council would have a better chance of passing, and fresh expenditure would be involved."

And in conclusion he said—

> "They might expect a falling revenue in the next few years, and there was no doubt that, if they acceded to those proposals, the Bill would have to be paid by the ratepayers. A very long and a very heavy bill it would be."

What he (Mr. Smith) had said would, he thought, at any rate sufficiently prove that though in accordance with the custom of this House it might under certain circumstances be advisable to allow this Bill to be read a second time, it certainly was not reasonable to suggest that this was the only perfect Bill before the House, and that it alone ought to be read a second time when other schemes were not to be discussed. In the next place, he suggested that this was not a kind of business suitable for a municipal authority to embark upon. It was a business of a highly speculative character; nobody knew whether even in the hands of a company it would be successful, and it was not right that the London County Council should incur in behalf of the ratepayers such a heavy liability. To push a business of this description required all the qualities necessary for a great commercial undertaking, and he much doubted whether those qualities could be properly possessed by any municipal authority. So far, the London County Council had given no evidence of possesssing such qualities. If they were to judge from what had already occurred, the loss upon this undertaking would prove to be as great as that upon other undertakings which they had gone into. He begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

*Mr. BERTRAM (Hertfordshire, Hitchin) in seconding the Motion said that he desired to associate himself with the hon. Member for the Strand Division in this matter. His reason was that there were on the Order Paper three Bills dealing with the supply of electricity in bulk, and he understood that thirty Members of this House, of whom fifteen were members of the County Council, were pledged to do their best to reject two of the schemes, and to send only the Bill of the County Council to a Committee. Speaking as a ratepayer of London, he desired that London should not lose for all time the opportunity of competition. Therefore he thought a Committee upstairs should have the various schemes submitted to them, and should select the best scheme upon its merits, thereby enabling the public to secure the best, the most efficient, and the cheapest service. It was said that the present Bill was conceived in a spirit of opposition to monopoly; but a monopoly did not cease to be a monopoly because it was in the hands either of the State or of a powerful local authority. For the House at this stage to make a selection between these Bills would be tantamount to saying that, so long as this Parliament continued, no enterprising body of people need come to the House for Parliamentary powers within the area of the county of London, and that the whole future was to be committed to the London County Council. The Committee to whom this Bill would be sent would have their hands tied. It was only when a Committee went into the details of competing schemes that they could judge them in the interests of the public. He had always felt that private enterprise and the power of personal choice should be jealously guarded, and he sincerely deplored the tendency to put private activity on one side and substitute for it public activity and the control of a majority vote. If the London County Council had its way London would only have one source of supply, and that would be the municipal source, and so competition would be cut off. The primary and the most valuable function of a municipal body was policing or regulation, and to that it should be restricted as far as possible. If they were to load the municipality with new duties, especially duties that more properly belonged to private enterprise, the regulating function of the municipal body would more and more be forced into the background. In 1903 Lord Camperdown obtained in another place a significant return of the number of Bills promoted by the London County Council, the fate they had met with, and the number of private Bills which the Council had opposed. From that return it appeared that from 1889 to 1902 the Council had spent £185,000 in the promotion of 154 private Bills, of which no fewer than eighty-seven had failed. Was the London County Council apprehensive of a similar fate for this Bill if it were sent with a competing Bill to a Committee upstairs? At any rate, believing as he did that free and open competition was to the best interests of the people of London, consumers of electricity and ratepayers, he desired to see the three Bills sent upstairs to be judged solely on their merits.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Frederick Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. WOOD (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said he was pleased to acknowledge the handsome confession which had been made by the seconder of the Amendment. The hon.

Member for Hitchin had confessed that he knew nothing about either the Bill or the companies, but if he had spent a few hours reading the proceedings in Committee of this or the other House he would have discovered some reasons why the people of London objected to the Administrative County of London Bill. It was a mistake to suppose that the objection to that Bill came only from the municipal authorities of London. It was felt just as strongly by private companies which were supplying electricity in London; and what the County Council desired to get rid of in opposing that Bill was not private enterprise, but private monopoly. The hon. Member for the Strand had appealed to those who voted in favour of the Administrative Bill last session to remain consistent, and to vote against the County Council Bill. He wished to point out that the position was entirely different this year. The Administrative Bill had passed through the ordeal of a Committee, and the alarm which it had awakened not only in the minds of borough councils but also among the private companies had steadily increased. The position was different in another respect, because this year they had a municipal alternative, and a choice was placed before this House. It was not necessary for him to dwell upon what had now become common ground in regard to the advantages of production upon a large scale for a very large area. It was obvious that there would be economy in machinery, plant, labour, and supervision, and in both schemes the generating station was near the river so that they could obtain sea-borne coal and an adequate supply of water for condensing purposes. What he had to show was why it was desirable that the supply of electricity in bulk should be entrusted to the central municipal authority for London and not to private enterprise. The policy adopted hitherto by Parliament in these matters had been a municipal policy. Whenever a borough council had in the past applied for an Order it had been granted, and when a company had applied for an Order power had always been given to the local authority to purchase the undertaking at the end of a fixed period. He admitted that confusion had arisen in some cases in regard to purchase, and he believed that some of the companies had been placed in a very awkward position and did not know how to develop their concerns. He believed that both public authorities and companies would be quite willing to come to Parliament to settle this question at no distant date. The principle of purchase had not been applied to most of the bulk companies. The hon. Member for the Strand had spoken as if this question had no history or past, and he implied that it had jumped into their brains in November last in hostility to the Bill of the Administrative Company. In 1898 the London County Council summoned a conference of local London authorities and they carried two resolutions, one being to the effect that it was desirable that the principle of purchase should be applied to bulk companies, and the second resolution was in the following terms—

> "That whilst preserving intact the rights of local authorities with regard to electric lighting and energy, in the opinion of this conference it is desirable that the London County Council should be in a position to undertake, if it so determined, or was so requested by the local authority, the supply of electrical energy in bulk for the convenience of any district so desiring to be supplied providing the Council does not become competitive with the local authority."

Upon that resolution this Bill was framed. Nothing was done up to the year 1901, when those two resolutions were reaffirmed by another conference, and a third resolution was adopted asking the London County Council to draft a Bill embodying the two previously passed resolutions. Such a Bill was introduced, but in 1903 the Board of Trade communicated its opinion upon this question to the London County Council, pointing out that this was a matter which should not be dealt with in a private Bill and that it ought to be dealt with by the Board of Trade itself in a public Bill. Consequently a Bill was prepared and introduced in 1904 and it passed through the House of Lords, but it was withdrawn before it reached the Second Reading in the House of Commons. In 1905 the Board of Trade again introduced a Bill dealing with this question. He did not say that that measure was an adequate solution of the question, but it was at any rate a step towards a solution, and so long as the Government was dealing with the matter it was impossible for the London County Council to take any steps. Therefore, it was very unjust to taunt the London County Council with being late in taking action in this matter because their hands had practically been tied. In the year 1905 eight Bills for the supply of electrical energy by private companies were brought before the House, and even then the Board of Trade did not press forward their Bill. He thought the opposition expressed in 1905 by two conferences of the local authorities of London to the Administrative Company's Bill was an opposition that was amply justified. He had no intention of going into the details of the Bill, but he wished to point out the only alternative to this measure. The spirit of the Administrative Bill had been well expressed in the phrase of Mr. Merz, the able witness for the company, referring to the existing authorised distribution, "They must come in or go under." The effect of the evidence went to show that the company's Bill did not mean so much cheapness to the consumer as a monopoly. The user of electricity was not safeguarded. The promoters of the Administrative Bill asserted that the Bill if passed would give to the industries of London the right to a supply of electricity for power purposes at rates cheaper than obtained in any other city in the world, but this and other statements put forward by them were not supported by the evidence. He could not find that it was proposed to give any valuable right to the individual consumer to demand cheap electrical power from the company. The London County Council dealt with the question of protecting the interests of the consumer in a much more effective manner. It was sought to give the Board of Trade power to revise prices at certain reasonable intervals on the application of the County Council. The administrative company practically sought power to enter into competition with the existing undertakers in regard to the supply of power. They took rights which would amount to coercive rights against the existing undertakers. When the borough council or company had been deprived of the power of selling electricity for motive purposes they would have to raise their prices for light, and the condition of the users of light would be worse than ever. What was the interest which it was sought to safeguard by opposing the administrative company and introducing a separate Bill? There was first of all the interest of the borough councils, amounting to over £4,500,000. Having sanctioned the loans was not that an interest which Parliament were bound to consider? Then the companies were acting under the sanction of Parliament, and were entitled to be protected from a great dominating monopoly. They had £11,500,000 of capital in the supply of electricity. He knew that in some quarters it was believed that a company could do anything more cheaply than a borough council, but the record of the borough councils did not bear out that claim. Seven borough councils were supplying at average prices between 2½d. and 3¼d. and not a single company at equally cheap rates. The case of Marylebone only proved his argument. Marylebone allowed a company to grow up and then bought it out, paying about £1,200,000 for the concern. The same kind of thing happened at Leeds, the cost to the corporation being nearly double the capital which the company had expended. They wished to avoid that error in London. They had been asked whether the supply of electricity in bulk was something which should be monopolised. It certainly possessed the characteristics of undertakings which ought to be monopolised. He thought the most convinced individualist would be ready to admit that there were businesses which in their very nature tended to become monopolies and which could supply most economically as monopolies. He might instance the water supply, the postal service, and the telephone service, and he certainly thought the supplying of electricity in bulk came under that category. But the holder of a monopoly ought to be a person or body which had no interest to serve except the public interest. No doubt he would be told that the competition of companies would keep down prices, but they had heard that argument before. When water companies asked for concessions it was always on the plea that if they were granted they would be able to keep down prices, but after a few years they found those companies making agreements with each other, and when the London ratepayers came to buy them out they had to buy them at the monopoly price of £50,000,000. They had not forgotten the story of the telephone amalgamation. These things were familiar history. A public authority had many advantages over a company. No promotion money had to be paid; there were no syndicates to receive a share of the profits or rather of the capital; and the money required could be raised more cheaply. In this case the London County Council had the advantage of already having a huge business in its hands that could not be taken from it by any competition. It had its tramway supply. It was estimated that the Council would shortly be using 37,000,000 units for this purpose, and that by the year 1915 they would require for that business alone no less than 89,000,000 units. That was nearly double what all the borough councils produced according to the last returns, and it was approximately the same figure as that which was reached by the whole of the companies. So that it would be seen that in this matter the London County Council started with an enormous advantage. These tramways were running from early morning till late at night. He would urge one thing as showing how the ratepayer was protected, and what great prospects there were in the County Council scheme. The rate of increase in the supply of electricity under not very encouraging circumstances during the past five years had been most remarkable. It had trebled since 1900. In 1900 it was 51,000,000 units, and in 1905 it was 156,000,000 units. He had no doubt that the lower price of a large scale production would make the increase greater than otherwise it would be. They believed they would be able to maintain that great rate of the last five years. If they had a large output and a good load factor, they had all the undertaking. The County Council had other advantages special to itself. It had substations already built for tramways, elements of a cheap supply and profitable and other substations must be built as they developed the tramways. The trenches which it used to convey electricity to the substations could be used for bulk and tramway purposes. In that way the necessity for breaking up the streets twice would be saved. The people of London knew what they had suffered from the too great freedom with which private companies had been allowed to break up the streets of the City, and he did not think that, unless necessity was shown, they ought to give power to break up the streets to private companies when they co uldplace it in the hands of municipal authorities. All these advantages added together went to show that the London County Council was in a strong position. That was his answer to the hon. Member for the Strand Division, who asked whether this was a business proposal. They were in a unique position to deal with this matter. As to the objections to the Bill, in the first place it was stated that the London County Council were going outside the County of London. That was never an objection in the case of a company, but the London County Council must not, according to their critics, go beyond the artificial line for the boundary of the administrative Council. As a matter of fact they went out not to coerce but to assist. They had to go out already. Parliament compelled them to go into the outlying districts for main drainage, although it was no advantage to the people of London but a considerable loss. When the water question was before Parliament this difficulty as to going outside was the great argument why the London County Council must not be the water authority. Then there was created the most anomalous and absurd body ever created for water supply, a body over which neither the consumer nor the ratepayer had the slightest control, which awakened not the slightest public interest, and which showed how little coherency or consistency it possessed when, after getting a Bill through Second Reading this session, it incontinently dropped it. The Traffic Commission said that it was necessary to go outside London in connection with London trams. The time had come when they must ask Parliament to recognise that the representative authority should be allowed rights given to other cities. They were given to the municipality of Glasgow in regard to telephones. When the major interest was in the great city, but it was desirable and in the interest of the outside areas that they should be united in one service, then the great city should be allowed, under proper safeguards for those outside, to go beyond those artificial and geographical boundaries which were very necessary from a local government point of view, but sometimes very inconvenient from the business point of view. This was not a coercive Bill. It was not a wrecking Bill. It would not require any existing undertakers to scrap their plant and write off their capital. The County Council did not say to an administrative company, "You must come in or go under." They took a more excellent way. They said, "We will give you cheaper power than you can generate by extending your system, and we will leave it to you to exercise your choice as business men to take the advantages we offer you." It was a policy of sweet reasonableness, and he hoped it would commend itself to the outside authorities as well as the inside authorities. The Committee in charge of the Bill would be prepared to consider any views that might be expressed by outside authorities. This Bill had been brought in with the approval of fourteen of the borough councils of London. They carried a Resolution asking the County Council to bring in the present Bill. [AN HON. MEMBER: Which boroughs?] He would tell the hon. Member. The Resolution carried at a Conference held in November 1905 was as follows—

> "That this Conference of Borough Councils approves of the introduction by the London County Council, of a Bill for enabling it to supply electricity in bulk, subject to the interests of the borough councils' existing undertakings being safeguarded, and the details of the measure proving to be otherwise satisfactory."

Fourteen voted for the Resolution and six against it. The boroughs which voted in favour of it were Battersea, Bermondsey, Bethnal Green, Camberwell, Finsbury, Fulham, Hackney, Islington, Lewisham, St. Marylebone, St. Pancras, Shoreditch, Southwark and Woolwich. The six boroughs against it were Hammersmith, Hampstead, Kensington, Paddington, Wandsworth and Westminster.

He wished to be perfectly open with the House. There was no doubt that some of the fourteen boroughs approving the Bill objected to one clause in it, and no doubt in Committee they would contest that proposal. It was important to retain this proposal in the interests of consumers of electricity. It was a proposal that after a certain number of years the County Council might go to the Board of Trade if the supply was inadequate or deficient, or excessive in cost, point out on what terms the County Council were prepared to supply, and ask the Board of Trade to consider all the circumstances and decide whether some action should not be taken to make the authority supply in a satisfactory way. It was natural that an existing authority should object to that, but it was a power not likely to be parted with. It would be a valuable power in the hands of the Board of Trade. His last word would be about the ratepayer. There was a notion common in some quarters that the County Council did not protect the ratepayer. If so, it was an extraordinary thing how the ratepayers for so many years had approved of that institution. He had shown that the County Council had special and unique advantages over any company in dealing with the supply of electricity in bulk. The County Council were not guilty of rashness in taking up this matter, but were merely using common prudence and foresight. The Council had been warned by past experiences which were not pleasant. London had had to buy freedom from great monopolies before now. They had not forgotten the £50,000,000 paid to the water companies, which would have been reduced by many millions had the advice of the County Council been taken and if the legislation had been passed when introduced. The water scheme had cost London £10,000,000 more than it ought to have done. The policy of the County Council now was to be in time to prevent the creation of a gigantic monopoly. The Council believed it was doing a good turn for many generations of ratepayers. He asked the House to pursue the settled policy of Parliament and not to establish a huge monopoly which would have to be bought out by some future generation of ratepayers at a great and exorbitant cost.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow had devoted the greater part of his speech to the denunciation of the Administrative County Bill. He held no brief for that or any other Bill, but he did hold a brief on behalf of private enterprise against municipal monopoly. The hon. Member began by stating that the state of things had greatly changed since last session. He admitted that, and the difference to his mind constituted a most startling change of front on the part of the County Council. In the discussion last session on the Administrative County Bill, which was for forty days under the close examination of a Committee, counsel for the London County Council said that "the Council did not desire to advance their own claims to be constituted the central authority either for the production or the distribution of electricity," and the hon. Gentleman himself said in his evidence that "the whole question should be considered comprehensively." The Council had executed an extraordinary change of front, for they now claimed to be constituted the central authority for the production of electricity, and sought to deny the House an opportunity for treating the whole matter comprehensively, by excluding from the consideration the two great measures now before the House which were variants of their own.

To what was this extraordinary change due? Was it due to the discovery that the London County Council—a body elected without reference to the special business aptitudes of its individual members, certainly without reference to their expert knowledge of electricity, had suddenly become possessed of all the qualifications necessary to carry on the most complicated, scientific, difficult, and from the financial point of view, doubtful enterprise of electric power supply?

He could find no proof of that, but he could give an instance, very close at hand, which illustrated the amount of confidence that the London County Council had in itself, not with regard to a great scientific project but with regard to a simple business proposition, that of selling land for building purposes. The House was aware that a large area of land in Westminster came under the control of the London County Council in connection with the completion of the Thames Embankment. While the part necessary for the new Embankment had, quite properly, been retained by the London County Council, the whole of the adjacent property had been handed over to a private syndicate who had undertaken to pay the London County Council 4 per cent. on the value. That was a very good rental. But what he wanted to ask was this. The syndicate was a commercial syndicate formed for the purpose of making money. It was going to make a profit—probably a large profit—over and above this 4 per cent. If the London County Council were business people, why could they not do the thing themselves and make that profit for the rates? Was it not a confession of their inability to carry on a business as well as private enterprise could, that they should give up this profit, which really belonged to the ratepayers? And was it not strangely inconsistent that, after admitting their inability to equal private enterprise in a simple business like letting building sites, they should now claim that they were qualified to embark upon a vast scheme of electric power, involving many millions of the ratepayers' money, and one of the most complicated and difficult business enterprises in the world? He was entitled to complain of the London County Council's treatment of that project which was situated in Westminster, as contrasted with this which was to be located in Battersea. He was not here to deny to Battersea the legitimate claim to electric energy in the person of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board; but he did not see that that generated a claim to have the works and the great expenditure of money, and the vast demand for labour, located within the limits of that distinguished constituency. Or had the London County Council changed front because it thought it could supply electricity cheaper than it was to be got at present? He would show that by this Bill they were entering into a trade competition, and a sort of competition that required all that peculiar kind of energy and push which was natural to private enterprises, but which could not be carried out by a municipal body. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?] Because London County Councillors could not undertake a hard canvass for trade, or conduct the difficult negotiations which secured customers, or instruct manufacturers how to re-organise their plant and suit it to electric power. He submitted it was an entire misconception of the proper functions of London County Councillors to involve them in such services; and that such services were absolutely essential to successful competition. Or, had they changed front because they were now convinced that the supply of electric power was a matter of such great importance that it should be in the hands of some central representative body? That, he admitted was the crucial point, and he desired to deal with it at once. If this were really a great project to supply the whole of London, and the enormous area they were taking outside of it, 387 square miles, and all its authorised distributors, and all its great commercial undertakings, railways, trams, docks, canals, waterworks, &c., with electric power on equal terms, why then, although in his opinion it would be quite outside the scope of the legitimate functions of a governing body, it would at least be logical. It would appeal to those considerations which no doubt existed in the minds of people who had not examined what was actually proposed, and who thought that electric power was a factor of great and growing importance; that its supply ought to be controlled by a representative authority; that if so it could be secured by everyone on equal terms; that a centralised source would ensure cheaper production, and so on. But the London County Council were not attempting anything of the sort. There was no universality and no general equality of terms secured by this Bill. It was simply a competitive business they were going in for. He was aware that the Report of the London County Council Parliamentary Committee said "the scheme is based on co-operation, not competition with existing undertakings," and the hon. Member opposite had advanced the same argument. They heard of that co-operation long ago—the sort of co-operation that existed between the wolf in the night-cap and Little Red Riding Hood. The London County Council proposed to enter the market, with the ratepayers' money, or with capital got cheap on the security of the rates, to compete with, and if they possibly could, to destroy, private corporate enterprise. It was quite obvious that was the case. In the first place nearly the whole area over which they were taking powers was already occupied by other undertakings which had been endowed by this House with the same powers which they, a governing body, were seeking, in order to convert themselves into a trading body. The Report of their Finance Committee said so. He would point out that the Finance Committee of the London County Council was the only expert body that had examined this scheme, and that its Report was the charter of opposition to it. What did they say on this point?—

> "Our attention has been directed to the extent to which powers of supply in the proposed area are already possessed and exercised by other bodies and companies. It seems that nearly the whole area is covered by local authorites or companies possessing provisional orders, and over a large part of the area bulk powers, practically identical to those proposed to be sought by the Council, have been granted by Parliament to certain power and electric companies."

Within that area there were three borough councils and six great companies that now had statutory powers to supply electricity in bulk; and of the sixteen borough councils that had statutory powers to distribute electricity, nine were now in a position to take it in bulk from these existing companies. Could there be a clearer proof that their object was trade competition with those companies, competition by means of the ratepayers' money with private enterprise, which a vast number of ratepayers had invested their money in? But there was another proof. While they were glad to have the aid of the belief or impression that they were going to supply all the power that London required and could not now obtain, their Bill was only permissive. Clause 7 read—"The Council may supply to such bodies and persons, etc." They did not have to. Was it any wonder that their Finance Committee, groping about for some wild scheme, found it in this permissive provision, and in their Report said—

> "There will be no power for any authorised distributor or other person to demand a supply, and consequently no obligation on the Council to give it. The optional nature of the powers to be sought, if that option is maintained, may be held to lessen to a certain extent the financial risks which attend the undertaking."

But their Finance Committee found an excuse in what, from the point of view of the public interest, was the weakest point in their Bill. They were not undertaking a great universal supply of the requirements of London on equal terms to all. They were simply grasping, by the rights they were trying to obtain from this House, and by the use of the ratepayers' money, at a position which would enable them to throttle private enterprise. It was quite true, as the hon. Member had said, they could obtain their capital cheaply; but on the security of the rates. Were the ratepayers secured? The Report of their Finance Committee said—

> "Whatever conclusions may hereafter be arrived at as to the probable ultimate financial results of such an undertaking as the Council may obtain power to establish, we are of opinion that the Council must face the probability that, during the early years, the undertaking will show a deficiency which will have to be made good out of the rates."

The whole policy of this Bill was a political policy. The London County Council hoped to obtain support for it from the other sections of that big majority and would no doubt offer each a political *quid pro quo* at the proper time. They had a pretty clear indication of its true basis when the hon. Member opposite said he was surprised to hear the speech of the seconder of this Motion to reject the Bill from that part of the House. That simply meant that the London County Council was a political body. Their policy was to turn the London County Council into a trading, not a governing body. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had always been a brave and consistent champion of that policy in this House. The present Government had made that policy its own by appointing the right hon. Gentleman to be the head of the one Department which had to do with and could control those extravagant municipal tendencies. It was well that the ratepayers of London should understand once for all the position of the Government in this matter, and the enormous expenditure, without any security for adequate return, which was going to be cast upon their already overburdened shoulders.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said the time had arrived when he ought to state on behalf of the Board of Trade what course they intended to take in regard to this Bill. The Government proposed to support the Second Reading of this Bill and, if that was carried, to move that it be referred to a hybrid Committee with a *locus standi* to all those who had petitioned against the Bill, including all the private enterprises which had been referred to. They proposed to instruct the Committee to consider, with special reference to this Bill, the best means of providing for a supply of electric energy in bulk and for power and motive purposes, and to report thereon. That instruction would give very full powers to the Committee to consider all the points that had been raised.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): Will you send the other two Bills to the same Committee?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Member had been fighting for the Company's Bills, but he did not think the promoters of those Bills really desired them to be sent upstairs to a Committee. All they wanted was a *locus standi*, and that the Government proposed to give them. The whole question would be considered by the Committee. That was the course suggested by the London County Council last year. They thought the question of the supply of electricity in bulk to London was a matter of such magnitude that it ought to be considered by a Committee of the House. It was now proposed that that consideration should be given on this particular Bill, and it was a course not inconsistent with that taken by the Board of Trade last year. Last year when there was only one Bill before the House, the Administrative County Bill, it was agreed on all hands that the question of the supply of electricity in bulk for all purposes was of the utmost importance to the greatest manufacturing city in the world—a city of small manufacturers. And it was also agreed that this was particularly a case for a scheme for the provision of electricity in bulk by some great central body. The London County Council had no scheme of their own, and the Board of Trade adopted the view that, as the matter was urgent, the only Bill before the House should be sent up to a Committee. This year the circumstances were different. They had a body representing the ratepayers of a great city bringing forward a scheme after mature consideration, and he thought when they came to consider competing schemes the municipality should have the first consideration. Their scheme ought to be considered in the first instance. He did not think that was disputed. But the Government did not ask the House to neglect the other schemes. A *locus standi* would be given to the promoters of the other schemes, and if the Committee came to the conclusion that the considerations urged against this Bill were substantiated in the main they could either reject the Bill or make a special Report as to what, in their opinion, would be the best method of dealing with this great and urgent problem in London.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS asked whether this Committee would have before them the Finance Committee of the London County Council or any Member of it?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the Committee would have power to call for persons and Papers, and could call up the gentlemen who prepared that Report if they desired to do so, and they could call upon the exceedingly able gentlemen who promoted the scheme of last year to scrutinise the document referred to by the hon. Member for Westminster.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: What is the objection to sending all these Bills to this Committee?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said there was a very substantial objection to that. He thought that, in a case of this sort, priority ought to be given to the scheme of the ratepayers. That was really his main reason, but he did not want to enter into that argument, because he did not wish to prejudice the consideration of the matter before the Committee. He thought the hon. Gentleman would be well advised not to press that point even in the interests of his own side.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: You do not know which my side is.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that no matter which side it was the hon. Gentleman would be well advised to accept the proposal put forward by the Government for dealing with this great and difficult problem. He understood the County Council were perfectly prepared to agree to this course. He understood, also, that that was the view taken by the Administrative County Company, and, after all, it saved expense. He must say, however, that the Government did not accept the view that had been urged that municipalities were not capable of going into enterprises of this character. The experience of London did not bear out that contention. He found that sixteen borough councils sold their electricity at 3¼d. per unit, and that the eight companies sold at 4d. Not merely did the borough councils sell more cheaply, but he found that there was not a single borough council that did not, in addition, make a profit ranging from £1,000 to £20,000 a year. So that all the talk about the squandering of the ratepayers' money was actually beside the mark. It was quite unjustifiable. The London County Council, and the borough councils more especially, had been running these electric enterprises with great success. The hon. Member who spoke last seemed very much afraid that the County Council might, in some way, crush out the enterprises of the borough councils. He found that the money that had been advanced to the borough councils for the purposes of these undertakings had been advanced to the extent of something like £4,500,000 by the County Council, so that the wolf had a vested interest in keeping Red Riding Hood alive.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Do they supply in bulk?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he knew that they supplied in bulk and at a very much cheaper rate than the companies; and the London County Council was prepared to supplement the cheaper supply of the borough councils. If hon. Members opposite thought this was a fair proposal he would put it on the Paper, and he trusted the House would give them now the Second Reading of the County Council Bill

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said he was in a position to state, on behalf of the promoters of the Administrative County Bill, that they acquiesced in the proposal made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He understood that every opportunity would be given to the Select Committee fully to investigate the whole question of electrical bulk supply, so that as a result of their deliberations some practical and economic scheme might be evolved. It was not his province to enter into the merits of the Administrative County Bill, nor into the merits of the London County Council Bill, nor to make any remarks on the speech made by his hon. friend the Member for Strand Division, nor on the eloquent speech of the hon. Member for Glasgow in advocacy of the London County Council Bill. It was only natural that the County Council, representing the ratepayers, should be given a preference in having their scheme thoroughly discussed and examined. If as a result of that examination it was found that the County Council could prudently, economically, and effectively give a bulk supply over this large area, then the situation, of course, was a different one from that of last year, when the Administrative County Bill was the only proposal before Parliament. The London County Council had undoubtedly the very great advantage of having the Administrative County Bill of last year to work upon, and also of having the expert assistance of gentlemen most competent to deal with this highly complicated question. The question was an extremely urgent one. It affected the greatest manufacturing area in the Kingdom. Manufacturers and railway companies had all been asking for this supply for a long time, and he only hoped that some conclusion would be arrived at, as the result of the examination by the Committee, which would meet with the general assent and agreement of those who desired to see a bulk supply furnished to this great area on an effective and economic scale.

*EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.) suggested that after the speech of the hon. Gentleman opposite and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, containing a proposal not, he thought, unreasonable, his hon. friend might agree to withdraw his Motion. He said that with the proviso that in withdrawing this Motion they on that side of the House were not to be taken as in any sense pledging themselves to the principle of the supply of electricity in London by a public authority as opposed to private enterprise. There were many of them who were not prepared to give a vote in that sense. It would be foolish to contend, in view of the Acts of Parliament that had been passed, that the supply of electricity was not, under certain circumstances, a legitimate object of municipal enterprise. But it was none the less municipal trading of a highly speculative character, involving very large expenditure, which a private company was justified in undertaking, but which a public body ought not to undertake without clearly ascertaining that the majority of the ratepayers was in its favour. He did not know that there was any indication whatever that the majority of the ratepayers of London was in favour of the supply of electricity by the London County Council. It was true there was a majority on the Council itself, but the Council was a decadent body, which came to an end next year. The scheme had been condemned by the Finance Committee of that Council.

MR. WOOD said he must be allowed to state that the scheme had never been so condemned by the Finance Committee.

*EARL PERCY said he ought not, perhaps, to say condemned, but the Finance Committee reported that there were no financial estimates which would justify it in expressing any opinion at all. The President of the Local Government Board had said that he regarded it as one of the great virtues of the Bill that it was so indefinite that it offered no target for attack. It was opposed also by a large majority of the borough councils [MINISTERIAL cries of "No"]—a majority then [renewed MINISTERIAL cries of "No"]; at all events there was no such consensus of opinion on the part of the borough councils as would justify them in saying that the ratepayers were in favour of the scheme, and the borough councils represented ratepayers who had already embarked large sums of money in local schemes which would be seriously hit by the project of the London County Council. In their opinion there were very grave objections to the municipalisation of a supply the cheapness and efficiency of which would depend on costly experiments and the constant discarding of old methods in favour of new, with the possible risk of eventual loss. And it must be remembered also that not only would there be a conflict of interests between rate-payers and consumers, but also between the ratepayers and their employees, for the London County Council was steadily forming a vast body of workmen who were always under the temptation to use their suffrages for the purpose of advancing their pecuniary interests. That was not a state of things likely to promote economy in business management or purity of local government.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford) said he wished to express his satisfaction at the policy adopted by the President of the Board of Trade. He had no objection to the London County Council having complete control over the electric supply over a wide area, but hoped that when the Bill went to a Committee upstairs the interests of the outlying districts affected which had themselves invested capital in electrical undertakings would be especially considered and safe-guarded. At present, he thought, the interests of the municipal authorities outside London were not thoroughly safe-guarded.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.) said that the Marylebone Borough Council had passed a resolution to the effect that the whole question and the supply of electricity in bulk should be dealt with by a Royal Commission. The proposal made by the President of the Board of Trade amounted to much the same thing, and he trusted that the whole subject would be most carefully considered.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said he merely wanted to ask one necessary question. The right hon Gentleman a few minutes before had implied that the promoters of the Additional Electrical Power Supply (London) Bill had agreed to the proposal of the reference to a Hybrid Committee, but that was not so.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I did not say that.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY said his impression was that the promoters of that Bill desired to have their rights saved and not to enter into any particular bargain.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do not think I said so, but I agree with what the hon. Gentleman says.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he only desired to detain the House for a few minutes while he said a few words on the connection of the City of London with this measure and the position of the Corporation. He wished to thank the President of the Board of Trade for his statement, in the first place because it was the right statement to make, and in the second place because he had adopted the proposal of the Corporation of the City of London. It was indeed identical with a proposal which he himself handed to the clerk at the Table some time ago, and further, the policy now being pursued was identical in terms with the evidence that he had himself given on behalf of the Corporation of the City of London last summer. He only wanted to mention on the part of the Corporation that they wished to have the fullest inquiry. The proper course was to send the Bills to a Select Committee or some body of that kind. In his evidence he had suggested either a Select Committee or a Royal Commission, but he thought the Corporation had been treated with scant courtesy by the Government. The Corporation had by letter asked that all the Bills should be sent to a Royal Commission for the fullest possible inquiry into the whole subject of the supply of electricity in bulk, but up to the end of last week they had received no answer. He himself had put a Question down on the Paper and had at the request of the Government postponed it, but they had in the interval answered a similar Question put by another Member. He was not sure that that was the proper or courteous way of conducting the business of the House of Commons. He thought it would be much better to send all these schemes upstairs, so that a Committee might consider what was best for the whole of London. In the City they were more interested in this Question than any other part of London, because they paid one-eighth of the rates, and should in case of a loss have to pay one-eighth of it. He was glad that the Government had adopted the course recommended by himself and the Corporation.

*MR. W. F. D. SMITH said that after what had been stated by the President of the Board of Trade he did not desire to proceed with his Motion and would withdraw it on the understanding that the whole question should be referred to a Committee upstairs.

Amendment by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question (March 26th), "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) thought that the House of Commons should be informed as to the contents of the Bill. The measure was supposed to be an innocuous one, but it affected the rights of the public. The Bill by reference included certain other Acts of Parliament.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the Bill simply extended the provisions of the

Money Orders Act, 1880 and 1883, to all British protectorates and to certain foreign countries.

Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time, and committed for tomorrow.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY BILL.

As amended, considered.

*MR. CLAUDE HAY objected to an Amendment carried at the instance of the Postmaster-General to extend the operation of the Act until December 31st, 1912. Since the Bill was last before the House various communications had reached him as to the effect which the Bill would have in regard to hampering the industry and the injustice it would inflict upon many who were devoting their intelligence and their capital to the development of this branch of science. As the Bill now stood it tied the hands of the public and Parliament as to wireless telegraphy till 1912. The Admiralty employed the Marconi system, but the War Office was using the Oliver Lodge-Muirhead system, but neither Department let the other know what they were doing. This was part of the bargain between the Marconi system and the Admiralty. The Lodge-Muirhead group alleged that Marconi had infringed their patents and were endeavouring to serve a writ upon the Admiralty. But the Admiralty refused service of the writ, referred the matter to the Treasury solicitors, and meanwhile this Bill was being rushed through the House to put the Lodge claim out of court. If the Bill were carried it would mean that the Lodge - Muirhead system would have no appeal in regard to their rights, and a monopoly would be established for the Marconi system, which was that of a foreigner. The Lodge-Muirhead system had proved a great advantage in India during the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales. It had also proved useful in other directions, including the conveyance of news from the Andaman Islands. He had recently received a Blue-book issued by the Government showing that during the past year the Lodge system as worked in India, had proved profitable both to the public and to the company concerned, and yet the Imperial Government was going to prevent the Lodge undertaking all chance of operating on the south coast of England, which was the most valuable part of the United Kingdom both commercially and scientifically for wireless telegraphy. He need not say that he had no sort of interest direct or indirect in any wireless or other telegraph company. He protested against tying the hands of Parliament in matters of the highest national importance. He moved to limit the operation of the Bill to December 31st, 1908.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD seconded the Amendment, and said he objected to the public's being deprived of the right of experiment and improvement in the system of wireless telegraphy. It would be impossible for any improvements to be carried out in scientific research if investigators were obliged to get licences before they could undertake the work. The restrictions were imposed at first for a limited period, but now they were to be imposed in perpetuity.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out the word 'twelve,' and insert the word 'eight.'"—(*Mr. Claude Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'twelve' stand part of the Bill."

*MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire) pointed out that the Act which gave the Post Office the monopoly of commercial telegraphy gave it incidentally the monopoly of wireless telegraphy. This was evident from the terms of the judgment in the telephone case, which laid down the doctrine that the telegraph monopoly extended to the telephone as well. By the Act of 1904 a much wider monopoly had been created, and the monopoly applied not only throughout the country, but to the territorial waters and the high seas. That was a very important step to take. The inventor was placed at the mercy of a monopolist Department, and experiment and progress in invention were checked. If it had been found that messages from one place interfered with messages from another place in such a way that wireless telegrams could not be worked, then he should be ready to assent to this monopoly being given to the Post Office, but that was not the case. As regarded the application of the measure outside the United Kingdom, he objected that the measure interfered with British ships carrying the apparatus for wireless telegraphy, while foreign ships remained perfectly free to do so. It seemed to him that the great reason for this Bill was that of national defence, but the necessary powers might well be secured by a provision which would enable the Privy Council in times of special danger to issue regulations. This was an occasion for obtaining some agreement with other nations as to the use of wireless telegraphy on the high seas or elsewhere, but it seemed undesirable to have a restriction, which, as regards the high seas, would operate only with regard to British ships. The question was now raised as to how long this Act should be continued. Originally the Act was designed to last only for two years. It was now proposed, without any very adequate discussion of the great principles involved, that this extensive monopoly should be extended for another six years. He was sure every hon. Member recognised the many difficulties with which the Post Office was confronted, and he for one would never do anything to embarrass that Department. He wished, however, to put before the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General the desirability of considering a reduction of the proposed extension to some shorter period than six years.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the object of the Bill was to prevent a monopoly springing up, and to give the Post Office and the Admiralty control over wireless telegraphy. At the time the original Bill was proposed there was only one Wireless Telegraph Company in existence — at all events, only one in active operation—and one of the chief objects of the original Bill was to prevent a monopoly of that sort which could not be prevented otherwise. If it were found in the next two or three years that further legislation was required in order to prevent a monopoly he could assure the House that so far as he was concerned such a Bill would be introduced, but the time had not yet come which necessitated any material alteration in the Act of two years ago. Against that Act there had been no complaint from any quarter so far as he had heard. It only gave power to the Postmaster-General to license various companies which applied for licences. It was not possible to have stations close to one another, and so far as invention had at present gone it was necessary to have stations so as not to interfere one with another. He could assure the House that the object of this Bill was certainly not to give any company a monopoly. All applications had been considered, and it was a mistake to suppose there was anything in the way of private inventors or companies wanting to carry out experiments. The fullest possible opportunity was given to all such persons. It was given under licence because from the Post Office point of view it was in the general interest of the public that there should be some control in regard to this matter. The Admiralty were absolutely convinced that it was essential not only that they should know where all the stations were, but that they should be able to put their hands upon them in time of emergency and at a moment's notice, and unless there were licences that information would not be available. The Post Office desired to give every facility to experiments by rival systems. They wanted to have experiments tried on these rival systems, in order that they could see which was the best. He took the same view as his predecessor, and had no desire to limit experiments, but on the contrary he desired to encourage so far as might be the various systems. He hoped under these circumstances the House would agree to the extension of this Act, on the understanding that, if the process of wireless telegraphy proceeded so rapidly owing to the discovery of inventions as to make it necessary to introduce other legislation, a Bill would be introduced either by himself or his successor before the end of six years. That moment had not yet come, and therefore it was wiser in order to prevent confusion to extend the Act as it at present existed. After all, the late Government did pass some good measures, and he thought that the Wireless Telegraphy Bill was one. In the interests of public policy he asked the House to reject the Amendment and to allow the Bill to proceed.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said the Postmaster-General had not given good reasons why the Amendment should be rejected. The Bill contained the words "until Parliament otherwise determines," and that provision left it open to Parliament at any time to reopen the whole question, and to examine any new facts connected with wireless telegraphy that might supervene. The right hon. Gentleman had said he wished the Act to continue until 1912—that was to say, for a period three times as long as the original Act was framed to cover. The right hon. Gentleman had also said that if necessity arose in the next year or so he would be fully prepared to amend the Act. It seemed to him that that gave away the whole case. If that were so, why not accept the shorter time-limit, or keep the words "until Parliament otherwise determines," which evidently was the considered policy of the Post Office at the date of the introduction of the Bill. The Amendment was passed three weeks ago without an inquiry, and no explanation was given why it was inserted. The only explanation given by the Postmaster-General was that negotiations had taken place, presumably on this particular point, and that he, in consequence, introduced these amending words. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the intention of the original Bill was to prevent a monopoly. He could not help thinking that the effect of the present scheme would be to perpetuate, if not to create, a monopoly. Under this Bill there was not a doubt in his mind that the Lodge-Muirhead system would be practically excluded from being used by the public service in this country. Litigation was pending—in fact, they had been trying to bring the matter into the courts for months past, but had been unsuccessful, owing to the blocking of the matter by the Admiralty. In his opinion, under the original Act, which it was now proposed to continue for six years more, it was practically impossible for suitable experiments to be undertaken by persons who were investigating the question of wireless telegraphy. The right hon. Gentleman had said that full opportunities would be given by the Post Office in such cases, and that there was no intention on the part of his Department to stand in the way of inventors and investigators. But against that he would simply put the practical experience of people engaged in this enterprise. He suspected that the Postmaster-General or his officials must know that at this moment experiments with wireless telegraphy were going on in this country for which licences had not been applied for or taken out by the experimenters, who preferred to run the risk of twelve months imprisonment with or without hard labour rather than submit under the Act to special conditions and restrictions without which the Postmaster-General permitted no licence to be granted. Everybody knew the position as regarded the Post Office. One particular system had been adopted by the Department to the exclusion of all others, and the humble inventor with small means and small facilities for carrying out these experiments did not dare take his claim to the Post Office to ask for a licence, because he knew it must be submitted to a particular Department which naturally and properly enough would put on whatever restrictions, conditions, and special terms they might think fit, not only to his detriment but necessitating the publication of his professional secrets. These men had to explain their system, where there stations were, at what altitude they would be placed, and so forth, so that the Post Office could understand whether their messages could or could not be intercepted by the existing system. It was too much to ask these men to inform their opponents of all the vital facts on which their systems were based. If the Postmaster-General would revert to the phrase in the original Act "until Parliament otherwise determines" there would be no objection on the part of hon. Members who took the view he did with regard to the Act, and the objection of a large number of scientific investigators, whose claims ought to be taken into account, would be satisfied, because they would then be certain that there was no intention on the part of the Post Office to create what appeared under the present Bill to be a monopoly in favour of one particular company.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said they all knew that the Admiralty had very large contracts with the Marconi Company, and he should like to know whether the statement was true that this litigation was pending, because it was quite clear that if the Admiralty were interested in the Marconi system, and the right to give monopoly was in the Post Office, it was very possible that the Lodge-Muirhead system would not be able to carry out the necessary experiments to complete their system, which, as they knew, had greatly advanced in India. The system appeared to be entirely a new one, and the House ought to take care that these licences were not worked in such a way as in anywise to favour the particular company with which the Government had entered into contracts. When the original Bill passed through the House it was considered essential that it should be passed in a tentative form and only for two years. The reasons which led to that conclusion still applied. This science was in its infancy, and he thought nothing would be lost by simply prolonging the Bill for another period of two years. A good deal might be done in the meantime. The litigation that had arisen would probably be finished, the merits of the different systems would be known, and there would be no suspicion of partiality towards those with whom the Government had entered into a contract. He suggested in fairness to all parties the Amendment should be accepted.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) expressed the view that, wireless telegraphy being in a progressive condition and having by no means reached the stage of finality, it was extremely desirable that the Act should not be continued for more than two years. This legislation was alleged at any rate to be limiting the progress of an art. Take the instance given by the Postmaster-General. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there must be these licences because stations could not be put close one to another. There was no reason why that difficulty should not be overcome in the course of the next two years. The right hon. Gentleman had given his undertaking, if any fresh discoveries were made, to make proposals to the House for any necessary alterations. That was surely a most unreasonable attitude, for how could the right hon. Gentleman bind his successors in office? The right way of meeting the situation was by limiting the duration of the Act to another two years.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that he was advised that the Bill would not in any way affect the position of the companies which had been referred to and the Admiralty.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 293; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 27.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Benn, John Williams (Devonp't
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. D.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, Rt.Hn.James (Aberdeen)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Buxton, Rt. Hon. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt.Hn.Richard Knight
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, R. R.
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (G'lway
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dolan, Charles Joseph
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Ferens, T. R.

Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn HerbertJohn
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie,J.Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen ,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal,E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Paul, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Phillipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John (Norfolk,E.
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W.Monmth
Richards, T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A.H. (AshtonunderLyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Ward, W.Dudley(Southampt'n
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Watt, H. Anderson
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A. (ElginandNairn
Wilson, H. J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Balcarres, Lord
Beach, Hn Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courthope, G. Lloyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh
Hills, J. W.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Marks, Harry Hananel (Kent)
Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancash.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Claude Hay and Lord Robert Cecil.

Bill to be read a third time to-morrow.

CONSOLIDATED FUND No. 1 BILL.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a third time."

*Mr. MORTON (Sutherland) said that if the Government had kept their promise of giving him an opportunity on the Report stage of the Vote on Account to raise his questions he would not have needed to trouble the House to-night; but this was the last opportunity he would have. There were a number of matters he should like to call attention to, especially with regard to the Scottish Office and the English Local Government Board, but these he would leave to another occasion. What he would draw attention to to-night was the neglect of General Botha's claim for compensation for the destruction of his property during the war in South Africa. General Botha assessed his claim at £15,000. It was reduced on the Government assessment to £7,000, and then General Botha was offered a cheque of £800 in full settlement of his claim. He declined to sign a receipt to that effect. Would the Under-Secretary for the Colonies say whether he proposed to take any action in the matter? A deliberate and solemn promise was made by the late Government that property burnt and otherwise destroyed should be paid for out of the fund of £3,000,000 which was provided for that purpose, and the treatment of General Botha in expecting him to give a receipt in full settlement of his claim under the conditions he had mentioned was about the meanest transaction he had ever heard or read of. He understood on the best authority that General Botha's property and that of the other generals ought never to have been destroyed. Especially was there no occasion whatever for burning General Botha's property, and the act was pure wanton wickedness on the part of the Government of the day. He was told on good authority that every officer and every soldier connected with the British Army was opposed to that wicked destruction of property, but was obliged to carry it out. He knew that when those methods had been properly described as "methods of barbarism," the Liberals had been charged with accusing the British soldier of carrying out those methods, but he was glad to know that no Liberal ever suggested or thought that either the officers or soldiers approved of this wanton destruction of property, but that it was done by orders of the Government responsible for all this wickedness. It was done by the late Government through Lord Milner.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman must confine himself to the subject matter of this Bill. He is going back five years.

*Mr. MORTON said that all he wanted to know from the Government was what they were going to do with regard to the claims that must be now before them. He understood that none of them were yet settled, and he wanted to know whether the Government recognising, as they ought to recognise, the very excellent way in which these Boer generals had behaved since the treaty settlement. Were they going to continue to treat them in the manner he had indicated? He knew his information was correct for he had it from the general. There was no occasion why the present Government should carry out the wicked work of their predecessors. The country had put them in office not to do that, but to show to all our subjects in South Africa or anywhere else that they were to be treated honestly, and that every promise that was made between us and the Boers would be carried out to the letter. If anything, let the Government show generosity to those who were once our opponents, but who had acted in the best possible spirit toward the Government and the people of this country. He hoped the Government would do what was right and proper, and ignore the evil deeds of the late Government.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.) said he was very sorry that the hon. Gentleman should have encountered inconvenience in regard to this matter, and he might assure him that it was not his fault that he was not able to be present when he raised this matter on a previous occasion, and that consequently it had been kept waiting.

*MR. MORTON: I quite admit my hon. friend is not to blame.

*MR. CHURCHILL said before giving an Answer he wished to thank the hon. Gentleman for the courtesy and consideration he had shown in allowing this matter to stand over for so long. He thought he could answer very shortly the point he had raised this evening. There were three classes of people who had been paid money in consideration of, or in connection with, their losses through the Boer War. There were first of all the British subjects who had suffered loss and had been indemnified to the extent, he thought, of 17s. 4d. in the £. Then there were those protected burghers who were indemnified under Lord Roberts' proclamation and who received £2,000,000 sterling amongst them, amounting, he believed, to rather more than 2s. in the £, and lastly there were the burghers under the late Boer Government who participated in the grant. It was in the last class that General Botha came. It was a mistake to assume that the grant of £3,000,000 under the Treaty of Vereeniging was intended to be compensation or repayment for war losses. It was for the purpose of assisting people to their homes and supplying others with homes. There were, he supposed, 40,000 applicants, and crediting every man with £25 a piece, that roughly speaking exhausted almost half the £3,000,000. After that the remaining sum was distributed among the claimants, having some regard to the proportion of their losses. Under this system of allotment General Botha's share amounted to £800. It would be clear to the House that had he received merely one 40,000th part of £3,000,000 he would have received a very much smaller sum than £800. It was contended by the Boers themselves that persons who were in the Boer Republic and were very well-to-do ought not to participate in the fund which was intended generally for the relief of the poorest among the burghers, and those who had really nothing left after the war Therefore he could not admit that under the principle of distribution which was enforced by the late Government any injustice was done to General Botha. It was quite true that General Botha was not prepared to sign a receipt in full for the £800, but he thought that General Botha adopted that course not because he wished to draw any attention to any injustice to himself but because he wished to protest against the inadequacy of the general provision. He did not understand that his hon. friend had any authorisation from General Botha to make a special claim on his behalf. He felt quite sure that his hon. friend had taken it up very properly as a matter requiring Parliamentary consideration.

*MR. MORTON : And as a matter of principle.

*MR. CHURCHILL said he was sure also that as a matter of principle General Botha would be the last person to avail himself of the influence of a Member of Parliament in order to obtain for himself special terms which other Boers did not get. Although he did not deny that the £3,000,000 sterling fell far short of the sum which would be required to balance even the material loss of the war, yet he was not at all prepared to say that they as a Government were prepared at this stage to put forward any proposal for adding to the very large sum already paid. A Committee had just reported on the compensation claims, and he hoped shortly to be able to lay the report on the Table of the House. The House would then no doubt be able to consider the question in detail. All he could say with regard to General Botha's claim was that he had been treated strictly according to the principle of allotment, and that on that principle he had received a very much larger sum than the great majority of the Burghers who fought with him so gallantly.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) said he had to move the Second Reading of this Bill and to explain briefly the nature of the alterations that had been made this year. First and foremost they had taken the opportunity, with the full consent of the Army Council and of the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War, who had been always of this opinion, to abolish flogging, root and branch, in the British Army. It had remained a question as to whether it should be retained in the military prisons. The view taken by the Government was this. It was quite true that there might be brutal offences against warders committed by prisoners, and it was possible that physical force and physical punishment might be required, but they held that in those military prisons into which men were sent for offences which were not the offences of the ordinary civil law it was inexpedient that this power should exist. If a man committed a brutal assault on a warder, it was an assault under the common law: let him therefore be turned out of the Army and turned over to the Civil authority, who would deal with him. It was thought that this was much better for the Army than that this policy should be retained in the Military prisons. The view of the Government was that men who ought to be flogged should not be kept in the Army. Another new provision was that in the case of certain slight offences where imprisonment was to be awarded in military prisons, they had altered the title and had called it detention instead of imprisonment. It was really detention, and it looked better on the record of a soldier; if he must be slightly restrained, it was better that he should be restrained under the term of detention than of imprisonment. There were one or two minor alterations in the Bill; for instance, when a non-commissioned officer suffered a sentence under the old system by a court-martial he was reduced to the ranks. The tribunal was now given the opportunity of inflicting on him only the loss of seniority. There were several other matters of that kind which he thought were better reserved for the Committee stage, and with that explanation he presented the Bill to the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he should like to add one word to what the right hon. Gentleman had said. Last year some hon. Members took a very strong view in favour of the abolition of corporal punishment in military prisons, and he undertook to make careful inquiry. He referred the matter to the governors of military gaols, and consulted Sir Evelyn Brise on the subject. The reports he was bound to say conflicted, and he was not able to accept those views as conclusive. He thought it could be in a certain sense justified that a man should not be punished by corporal punishment for an offence for which he would not have been punished had he not been a soldier. That being so he ventured to disregard the opinion he had received, and to decide that this punishment should cease. He was glad that his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War had made this decision operative. His view was that the interest of the soldier more than ever demanded that every effort should be made for improving his social *status*, and increasing the consideration in which he was held. He was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman had decided now to carry out a reform of the law which he believed could have been carried out by regulation. He was also very glad that he had accepted the suggestion of altering the form of words describing the position of a soldier in a military prison. He would make a further improvement. He thought the time had come when every effort should be made to withdraw soldiers altogether from civil prisons. It was not good for the soldier.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the speech of the Secretary of State for War illustrated the fact that improvements in the barbarism of the military code had always been obtained by very sharp action on the part of Members of this House. The Act which abolished flogging in the Army in its old form was the result of a fourteen days debate virtually on this Bill in Committee, and the change that had taken place this year, prompted no doubt by the humane instinct of the right hon. Gentleman himself, was nevertheless forced upon the military authorities by the all-night sitting last session. This Bill brought into force the whole of the military code, which was one of extreme complexity, and most unintelligible. He was certain that the present Secretary of State could not give his mind to the consideration of this code without seeing that it was necessary to revise and very largely alter it. It was impossible to do that this year. It would be most unfair to press the Secretary of State to do it, but they had every right to call his attention to the barbarous character, and the extraordinarily complex character of the Bill. Although they were not disposed to press Amendment in Committee this year, they would at least ask for the undertaking of the right hon. Gentleman to alter the Act before next year. Members had been led to make proposals, which were somewhat opposite so far as they concerned the officers to those which they had made concerning the men. In regard to the officers they had pressed for the regular forms of the Statute in regard to inquiries, but in the case of the men they had taken the opposite line and had deprecated the enormous extension of courts-martial, especially in regard to mere boy recruits, who were almost forced into technical crime against their will and could hardly be found otherwise than guilty, with the result that they were sent to prison. The facts were described by the military authorities themselves in language which was positively startling. The Reports of the Directors of Military prisons were somewhat out of date, but according to the Report of 1904, 7,750 men were sent to prison as the result of courts-martial. That was an enormous increase. It was impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to leave matters where they were. The Report of the Director of Military Prisons for 1903, gave the Reports of the Directors for various prisons. Those Reports showed that men were discharged as worthless who would have made fine soldiers, but having committed some technical offence in the early days of their service they were driven into gaol and afterwards discharged without a character. That there should be a total of 22,000 men in the home stations driven into military prisons every year, that there should be 7,750 they men driven into gaol by courts-martial every year, that they should have officers themselves going almost beyond their duty to point out the detrimental effect which it was having upon recruiting, and that they were condemning these men for the whole of their lives beyond all redemption for committing some technical offence when mere boys, was surely a matter which if the right hon. Gentleman looked into he must see his way next year to alter. The Act was hoplessly out of date. As regarded the men, he hoped the rigidity of the courts-martial would be got rid of, but as regarded the officers, irregular inquiries in their case were to be deprecated. The Kinloch case proved the necessity for the demand that was made. He had only one other thing to say, and that was to repeat that the law was not intelligible. It required redrafting in many particulars. When the hon. Member for East Bristol said a year or two ago in a debate on this Bill that the soldier could not understand the Act, he was well within the mark. Last year the War Office pointed out that all a soldier needed to note was contained in the small book. All he could say was it was not contained in the small book. No man enlisting in the Army, or his friends, could possibly understand the conditions of military law by reading the small book. It contained certain penalties, but there were an enormous number of things such as proceedings of courts martial which he ought to know, which were entirely outside the small book, and such was the complexity of the law, that the ordinary enlister would find himself entirely unable to grasp its meaning at all. The whole code was unintelligible, not only to the ordinary man, but even to a lawyer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he desired formally to move that the Bill be read this day six months. He did so because he did not think he could deal with the question otherwise. He recognised the beneficent alterations which were made in the Act this year. But this Bill, as they knew, was a coercion Bill for the Army, and suspended the constitution so far as the soldier was concerned, and his complaint was that this coercion law was not under the administration of this House. At one time there was an Attorney-General for the Army, who was responsible to this House. Although he was never a Cabinet Minister he was, ex-officio, a member of the Privy Council, and had the right absolutely to seek and obtain audience of the King in matters referring to the Army. In the year 1892 Sir Francis Jeune accepted, at the instance of the Government, the honorary post of Judge Advocate-General, and he continued in that post until his death. The office was subsequently filled by a barrister of a few years' standing, a gentleman named Boase. He thought it was a bad thing to have a coercion Act administered by a boy going about in a stuff gown seeking briefs. He was told repeatedly that fresh arrangements were to be submitted to Parliament by the late Government, but they were never submitted. Just before the prorogation of the late Government it was stated that Mr. Milvain, a member of this House, was to be appointed Judge Advocate-General under a different system. Mr. Milvain was appointed a few days after the prorogation, but he did not resign his seat until five weeks afterwards. That appointment had never been brought under Parliamentary sanction. It was not a civil, military, or legal appointment. It had emanated from the acute brain of the right hon. Gentleman the

Member for Croydon. The position carried with it £2,000 a year, and at the age of seventy the gentlemen in question was to go out with a pension. There ought to be a Minister in the office directly responsible to the House. He asked the Secretary of State for War not to make himself the universal legatee of Arnold-Forsterism. The right hon. Gentleman was not bound by this contract. How was it possible for the late Secretary of War of his own sweet will to manipulate a post of so great importance? He hoped the Attorney-General would be grateful to him for having introduced this subject to-night, and he only hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would repeat the speech he made on this subject in the last Parliament. In view of the immense importance of the duties of the office he would ask his right hon. friend if necessary to hand Mr. Milvain £20,000 down, and have a proper person to administer justice in the Army. If there was to be a drastic code let it be administered by a gentleman who was responsible to this House.

MR. PAUL (Northampton) seconded the Amendment. He had not a word to say against the competence of Mr. Milvain. On the contrary, he believed him to be a perfectly competent man; but had the executive Government power to create a new salaried permanent office without the consent of Parliament? The office might be said to be represented in this House by the Secretary of State for War, but the Judge Advocate-General was not a mere subordinate. He had direct access to the Sovereign. He had personal responsibility for the findings of all courts-martial, which it was his duty to revise. They could hardly conceive a more important officer connected with the Army, and he ought to be responsible to this House. Therefore he hoped that as a result of the Amendment they would get an assurance from the Government that they would put an end to this anomalous state of things and place in the office which Mr. Milvain now occupied a responsible member of the Government.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) drew attention to the inadequacy of the rations of the private soldier. The allowance for a private soldier on the march was 4d. per night and a meal. An officer had 2s. For breakfast the private soldier got 1½d. In the last Parliament it was thought that the allowance was inadequate. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon spoke of encouraging self-respect amongst our soldiers, but what self-respect could they expect from a man who was allowed 1½d. for breakfast? A tramp in the casual ward got a more generous allowance. He hoped, therefore, the Secretary of State would consider a revision of the scale, so as to give the soldier the feeling that he was not being treated as a menial of no account, but was receiving the respect due to a man and a soldier.

MR. HALDANE said it was quite true that the lodging allowance of an officer was 2s. a night, but the officer had to pay for his food, which the soldier had not. The allowance for meals was fixed some little time ago, and on the whole it had worked out well, and proved in practice to be sufficient. It did not look a great deal, but when a considerable number of men were dealt with at the same time meals were provided at a comparatively low charge. Had complaints been received, however, he would have inquired into them at once, but complaints had not been received. Regarding the question raised in the Amendment it had been from time to time thought that the office of Judge Advocate-General had not been wholly satisfactory, having regard to the peculiar qualifications required for the office, and Mr. Gladstone was not moved merely by considerations of economy—for no one more desired to see justice done—when he chose a judge of the High Court for the post. Consequently the work fell into the hands of a subordinate official, who did the work very well, but still was not in a position that the new Judge Advocate-General was. He recived a salary of £1,500 a year, which came to an end with the termination of his office. Then the matter was inquired into not merely by the late Government, but was suggested by the Esher Committee, which came to the conclusion that it would be well to assimilate the arrangements in the Army with those in the Navy, and they advised the creation of a permanent Judge Advocate-General who should have some skill in military law. The late Government appointed a gentleman who, he could say from experience, showed great ability and wisdom in the discharge of his duties. He was bound to say that whether it was the imperfection of his own capacity or the perfection of the capacities of the occupier of the office, he found very little reason for altering the conclusions to which he arrived. It was true that the Judge Advocate-General was not in Parliament and responsible to Parliament, but the present arrangement was come to after the conclusions of the Esher Committee, and it was one which they could not depart from without making substantial compensation to the present occupant of the office, and, speaking for himself, he would prefer to see a person of long experience, such as Mr. Milvain was, to somebody who, however capable, could only give spare time to the increasing work of the office. Therefore, speaking for himself, he should prefer to leave these matters just as they stood at the present time. On the whole, he thought the new system was probably a better system, but be that as it might, it was a system they had got, and so, whatever might be the high constitutional grounds which brought about the original office, they had adopted the system now, which was certainly much more in accordance with the conditions of the Navy, and was, on the whole, more useful to the Army.

MR. STUART WORTLEY hoped the House would notice that no hon. Member had questioned the qualifications of Mr. Milvain for the discharge of the duties of his office, but they had a patent fact in this debate, that the hon. Member for Northampton had actually recommended that this House should proceed to a system of political proscription upon change of Government, upon a completely imperfect view of the whole circumstances of the case, and showing a complete ignorance of what had taken place.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said it was a most astonishing thing that hon. Members who had objected to various parts of the Bill for hour after hour in the last Parliament did not now propose even to amend the Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Lords' Message [20th March], relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Sunday Trading, considered.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Five Members be appointed to join with a Committee appointed by the Lords (as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of 20th March) to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

And, it being after One of the Clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 27th March, 1906.

EARL OF BESSBOROUGH.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Edward, Earl of Bessborough, to vote at the elections of representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Penllwyn Railway and Road Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western and Rhymney Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Harrowby be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Belhaven and Stenton; read, and agreed to.

North Sussex Gas and Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

Manchester and Milford Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Superannuation Fund) Bill [H.L.]; Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Holyhead Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited; Petition of the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited, under their common seal, praying for leave to introduce a Bill "to enable the Scottish Provident Institution Buildings, Limited, to pay interest out of capital on certain of their shares; and for other purposes," together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the examiners.

Sheffield District Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee. That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 8th instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Millwall Dock Bill, North Metropolitan Tramways Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Wallis Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the case: Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools:—Of teachers in schools at St. Michaels-on-Wyre, Garstang; Moorside; Church Kirk; St. John's, Bury; Churchtown; Neales; Goosnargh; Wreagreen; Kingley; Stoneclough; Baxendale; St. John's, Bury; Ribby-with-Rea; Treales; Inskip; Walmsley. Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Ribby-with-Rea; Ballarn; Kingley; Stoneclough; Moorside; St. Michaels-on-Wyre; St. John's, Bury; Churchtown; Hesketh-with-Beckensall; Inskip; Whitechapel; Church Kirk; Crawshaw Booth; Baxenden; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

VAGRANCY.

Minutes of evidence taken by the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. Volume II. Minutes of Evidence, digest of evidence, and general index to evidence, appendix, and report.

Appendix to the report of the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy. Volume III. Appendix, with charts and maps.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

Tables showing for each of the years 1900–1905, the estimated value of imports into the United Kingdom, and exports from the United Kingdom of articles of British and Irish production at the prices prevailing in 1900, with an introductory memorandum.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Annual reports of proceedings under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, etc., for the year 1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHTHOUSES, &c. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).

Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their inspection of local lighthouses, buoys, and beacons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 132 of Session 1905).

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Order made by the council of the borough of Barnstaple, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain shops within the borough.

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL.

Returns of the receipts and expenditure of the General Medical Council and of the branch councils; also of receipts and expenditure of the Dental Registration Fund, for the year ended December 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have appointed a Select Committee of five members to join with the Select Committee appointed by this House, as mentioned in their Lordships' message of the 20th instant, to enquire into the subject of Sunday Trading.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL [H.L.]

Reported from the Standing Committee with an Amendment. The Report thereof to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 36.)

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

Read 1ª; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next (The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon.*)).

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS (REGISTRATION OF PATENT AGENTS) BILL [H.L.]

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING].

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, this Bill deals with a subject which has been a great deal canvassed for many years in this country, and which, I think, has partially divided the opinion of legal experts, but I do not think there is, or has been for a long time, any considerable section of opinion, either at the Bar or on the Bench, that is not prepared for a measure going a considerable distance. Though I believe there is no country in the world where justice is more fearlessly and more effectively administered than it is in this country, and while I yield to no one in my respect and admiration for the spirit in which the Criminal Courts are conducted, of which I have had myself some experience, yet it is beyond human nature to suppose that there is, or that there ever can be, without some opportunities for appeal, an entirely satisfactory condition of things. From time to time there have been, as, indeed, quite recently, instances of error, admittedly innocent error, on the part of the Courts, resulting in a great deal of hardship and suffering to individuals, which have stirred the public mind. With that preface, for your Lordships are many of you familiar with the administration of criminal justice yourselves, I shall proceed to say a word or two on the subject of criminal appeals, and contrast them with the appeals allowed in Civil Courts.

Let me take, in the first instance, the system of appeal which obtains in the Civil Courts of this country. In regard to civil procedure, the smallest cases tried, for example, in the County Courts, are subject to appeal upon matters of law, but they are not subject to appeal upon questions of fact; and I must say that I have never seen any cause for complaining of the state of the law. It is to the interests of the public that litigation should be ended, and where the sum of money involved is small it does seem to me more desirable that there should be some risk now and then of failure than that there should be constant opportunity for appeal, and the waste of time and money which that would involve. When you go from the smaller kind of civil case to the more important litigations, which are abundant in this country, you find that the facilities for appeal are enormous. A case may be tried by one of the greatest Judges of the day before a special jury. It may have lasted days, or indeed, as sometimes—but happily seldom—happens, it may have lasted even weeks; but there is an appeal, not only as to law, but an appeal on every point of fact on which the jury have come to a determination—an appeal to the Court of Appeal, and then to your Lordships' House. There is an appeal also on the point of damages that may be assessed, assuming that the verdict and judgment may be right.

Not only so; there is an appeal on what may be called interlocutory proceedings. I would give an extreme illustration. Suppose that one side wishes to have a case, involving, say, £100, tried at Bristol, and the other side wishes to have it tried at Glasgow. Such is the state of the law that an appeal can be taken to the Court of Appeal and then to the House of Lords upon the question whether this case, involving merely £100, shall be tried at Bristol or at Glasgow. I am not making any complaint about the facilities for appeal that exist in regard to civil causes, but I think it is a very open question whether there is not too much facility for appeal in regard to civil causes. It is not a matter that is relevant to my proposals to-night, but I think it may well be that some restriction would be advisable, but nobody would ever dream of proposing that there should be no appeal at all. All that the most zealous reformer in that respect would suggest would be that there should be some limitation to the exuberance of appeal in civil causes. So much for civil causes.

Now I come to the criminal law. Your Lordships will find that in the Criminal Courts the law is almost exactly the reverse of that which obtains in Civil Courts. In small, insignificant cases tried before the magistrates, where three months' imprisonment is a possible penalty, there is an appeal. In small cases, where a man may only be fined, or where he may be sentenced to only three or four days' imprisonment, there is an appeal to quarter sessions, and very properly, too; but in grave criminal causes, in which a man may lose his life or his liberty for the whole of his life or for ten or five years, there is, with two exceptions, substantially no appeal at all. Let me give the two exceptions. I am not pretending to offer to your Lordships an exhaustive and detailed statement, but merely an outline, which I think will be found perfectly accurate, of the right of appeal in these cases. If the Judge who tries the case thinks fit to reserve a point of law for the Court of Crown Cases Reserved, he can do so, and then the point of law alone may be made the subject of appeal. But it very often happens that the Judge, being himself satisfied of his own opinion, refuses to grant a case at all; and there is no machinery of any sort, kind, or description known to the law—I mean no machinery of the law apart from the prerogative of mercy—by which that Judge can be set right, though it may be notorious that his law is wrong.

There was the case, quite recently, of Adolf Beck, who, I believe, was perfectly innocent, and was so stated to have been by a Royal Commission. There was an undoubted misdirection in that case; evidence was refused admission which was palpably proper evidence to have been allowed. The Judge was confident that he was right, although he was transparently wrong; he refused to grant a case; and no remedy against his refusal was possible. Another case where an appeal is allowed at present is that limited kind of case in which by *certiorari* the case has been brought up for trial in the King's Bench Division, and then there is an appeal both on law and on fact. But those cases are very rare. The result is that, no matter how bad the law may be that the Judge lays down—and criminal law is not always absolutely clear—no matter how erroneous the verdict of the jury may have been, there is at the present moment no means of obtaining redress in any Court of Appeal in this country. To put an extreme case, a man may be tried for his life and have no appeal; he may wish to get a case, involving only £100, tried at Glasgow instead of Bristol, and he may take that question up to the House of Lords. Surely, my Lords, such a state of things is a plain absurdity.

As to the remedy proposed by this Bill, a Court of Criminal Appeal is to be constituted, consisting of Judges of the King's Bench Division, with the Lord Chief Justice of England as President. It is proposed that they shall have authority to entertain appeals upon all questions of law that may be raised, and that they shall be able to hear appeals on all questions of sentence. All points of law may be heard by them and reviewed; all sentences may be heard by them and reviewed; and also all questions of fact may be reconsidered by them in the same way as in Civil Courts. A prisoner is not to be required to be present, and, unless the Court think fit, he is not entitled to be present at the hearing of the appeal. He need have no counsel or solicitor, and, if he has none, the Judges will consider the depositions and the evidence he has given and any statement in writing which may be made.

I would point out that there is only a small portion of this Bill which has not been already covered by high authorities. As to point of law, a Bill was introduced last year by the late Government, which I heartily agreed with, requiring any Judge to state a point of law so that it might be made the subject of appeal. Substantially, I think, everybody will agree that my proposal is, in spirit, so far identical with that of the late Government. As to the reconsideration of sentences on appeal, that has been the subject of various Bills, and it was also the subject of a recommendation—I think a unanimous recommendation—by His Majesty's Judges themselves in the year 1892. As to the reconsideration of questions of fact, that is not a novel proposal, but I am sorry to say I cannot claim for it the same high authority, and I am afraid from what I hear that it is quite possible that it may encounter resistance. I do not propose to enter in detail or at length into that question to-night, because we are, after all, dealing with the Second Reading of the Bill, although I fully acknowledge that this is a very material portion of the Bill and will no doubt require scrutiny afterwards.

To those who object to the proposal I would put two questions for consideration. First, within the limited scope in which the Courts have already the power of reconsidering the findings of juries, has it not been found that the power is very necessary to justice? I do not think that any Judge will deny that that is the case, and if it is the case in civil practice, why should it not be equally necessary, or, at all events, equally expedient, in criminal cases? Secondly, in that limited class of criminal cases in which reconsideration has been tried by *certiorari*, is there any member of the Bar or Bench who has ever heard of any complaint of the way in which the power of revision of trials has been used and applied by Judges? For my part, I feel that the Bill would be shorn of more than half its value if, after granting an appeal on a point of law and also on a question of sentence or punishment, Parliament were to refuse an appeal on the ground which makes the full complement of justice—the right to reconsider from all points of view every element which had gone to procuring the conviction.

It is said that a measure of this kind will in some way interfere with the functions hitherto discharged by the Home Office. I have not the least doubt that it must be a most painful and difficult duty on the part of the Home Secretary to act as a sort of informal Court of Appeal from the trials of causes at assizes or quarter sessions. I believe that the work has been most conscientiously and most laboriously done, and with the most excellent effect in many ways. But I cannot help suspecting that every Gentleman who has ever filled the office of Home Secretary must have felt how inadequate was the machinery at his disposal for the discharge to his own satisfaction of this most important of all duties—the prerogative of mercy in all its various phases. This Bill does not propose to deprive the Home Secretary of any of the powers which he possesses at the present time, but it does give him a facility which, I think, he will value—that is to say, he is entitled, if he thinks fit and finds he has not the machinery for weighing evidence, to send any case which puzzles him for advice and recommendation to the Court of Criminal Appeal. That is the whole substance of this Bill, and I trust the House will give it a Second Reading. If, however, an onslaught is made on any particular part of the Bill, I will endeavour to satisfy the criticism when we reach the Committee stage. But I hope that the Bill will at least be allowed to reach Committee stage, so that it may be made into a workable measure.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

*VISCOUNT CROSS: My Lords, having twice filled the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department, I can assure your Lordships that no one has felt more deeply than I have the grave responsibility cast on the Home Secretary in a great number of these criminal cases, and I am sure that no future Home Secretary would feel other than thankful to be relieved of some part of these duties. But it is quite clear that the prerogative of mercy must be retained. With that safeguard I only want to say that, so far as the Second Reading of this Bill is concerned, not only shall I offer no opposition to it, but I am glad to hail its introduction into your Lordships' House. At the same time, I am bound to make one or two observations on the matter.

I agree with the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack that there should be an appeal for the revision of sentences, and to a certain extent an appeal on questions of fact; but I think, with regard to questions of fact, that this Bill is too large. I am quite sure that that part of the measure will require to be carefully considered, and probably a good many safeguards may be necessary there. With regard to the most important criminal cases of all, where the prisoner is sentenced to death, I think it is quite right that there should be an appeal to a Court of law on the question of law. There could be no appeal against the sentence. It cannot be denied that this Bill would involve a large increase in the Judiciary. I am perfectly certain that it would be impossible to throw these extra duties on the existing staff of Judges. They would not have time to discharge them; they are overworked as it is. There are great delays in connection with civil causes, and if you throw all these extra duties on the present Judges the delays will be very much greater.

I believe the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack will agree that where a man is sentenced to death and there is an appeal, the country would not allow that the death sentence should be hanging over the head of this person for a month or six weeks until the Court of appeal had given judgment. It would be absolutely necessary in the statute itself to lay down that appeals in those cases should be decided within a very limited time. I am very strong on this point, that that should be laid down in the statute itself, and should not be left to the Judges to be dealt with by rule. It should be laid down in the statute that wherever the Judges may be, whether on holiday or not, appeals in cases of murder should be tried within a limited time. The first effect of this Bill, if it passes, will be to render necessary a considerable increase in the number of Judges. When the Bill is in Committee I may have a good many things to say as to the details, which I will not enter upon to-day; but as one who has felt for many years the burdens which are cast on the Secretary of State for the Home Department in dealing with these cases, I willingly support the Second Reading of the Bill, on condition that when we go into Committee the clauses will be very carefully considered.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I may say at once that I do not rise to move the rejection of this Bill. I think it would be disrespectful to the noble and learned Lord who has introduced it, and disrespectful, also, to the subject-matter, which is of supreme importance, not to consider the Bill and its details. Therefore, though I must admit that no amount of Amendment would induce me to consent to one part of the Bill, I gladly acquiesce in the suggestion that it should be read a second time. I cannot think that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack quite contemplates the extent of what he is going to do.

Let me, in the first instance, point out what the effect of the Bill as it stands will be. There is to be an appeal on every question of law or fact. There is to be a right to have the question of the sentence considered, but it is a right that is only to be exercised in one direction. A conviction may be quashed; a sentence may be altered to the advantage of the prisoner who has been convicted; but there is no power to increase the sentence. This is a general right of appeal in every case, either upon law, or fact, or sentence; but it is only a one-sided appeal in this sense, that the sentence cannot be increased. What will the obvious effect of this be? Is it possible to doubt that there will be, if not in every case, in almost every case, an appeal? What has a convicted prisoner to lose by it? He may benefit; he cannot lose. That is rather a serious proposition. A jury is a constitutional tribunal, and to say that, on every question of fact, three, four, or it may be five, Judges are to be empowered to overrule the deliberate verdict of the jury in every case seems to me to be a most extraordinary suggestion, and one which is inconsistent with the constitutional theory which makes the jury responsible in this matter.

But what strikes me as one of the most important and serious parts of the suggestion is this. No one has, I think, more justly or more truly described the course of administration of criminal justice in this country than the noble and learned Lord himself. I think it is recognised to be as careful and as upright as could possibly be desired; but what do you suppose will be the effect of such an alteration of the law as this Bill proposes? Those who have been familiar with Criminal Courts will know that juries are rather reluctant to convict. They have a sense of responsibility involved in the fact that from their decision there is no appeal. Pass this Bill, and jurymen will say, "It does not much matter whether we convict or not. The case will be tried again before the Judges, and they will put it right if we are wrong." I think that the feeling of responsibility among jurymen has been of infinite value in preserving the care with which justice is administered in this country. Under this Bill that will be swept away. I have no doubt that jurymen, if this Bill is passed, will convict with much greater facility than they do now.

I want to know what is the error in our system which calls for the introduction of a Bill of this kind. It is said that occasionally injustice is done. Just conceive the number of cases that are tried with perfect satisfaction to everybody, except, perhaps, to the prisoner convicted, and the number of cases which are supposed to constitute hardship. Take the case of Adolph Beck. It is quite beside the present question. What was the error in Beck's case? I am not now speaking of the technical error to which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack referred; but what was it which caused an innocent man to be convicted, sentenced, and severely punished? It was the evidence of the twelve independent witnesses who swore to his identity. How are you going to alter that? It is said that there was a particular question of law which ought to have been reserved. Probably that is so; but I think my noble and learned friend was a little hard on the learned Judge who refused to reserve a point. My experience is not like his in that respect. I have never known a Judge to refuse to reserve a point of law.

The alteration in the law suggested by the late Government in the Bill which was brought forward by myself and passed through this House was simply this, that instead of its being optional with the Judge to reserve a point of law he should be compelled to reserve it. That would certainly have made no such revolution as is made here. As this is to be only a preliminary discussion—the noble and learned Lord has reserved to a future occasion the great discussion which we are to have on the subject—I do not propose to go through the various clauses; but I may say that there are points in the Bill to which no objection can be taken. I should not, for instance, entertain any objection to a revision of sentences, but it is not right that there should be no power to increase sentences. In civil causes the right of plaintiff and defendant are identical in that respect. You do not provide for small cases in this Bill because, you say, they are sufficiently provided for. But are they? You may have a cumulative sentence, for instance, of twelve months, and then you have to have notice of appeal, to serve the notice on the magistrates, and then to have the question discussed whether that appeal can be allowed or not.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has no authority, that I am aware of, for saying that people are desirous of new trials on questions of fact. There was a Commission of the Judges on the subject. They made no Report in favour of new trials on fact. There was a subsequent Report of the Judges in 1892. They made no such recommendation at all. It must be remembered that you are dealing here with experts who have had long knowledge of what they are talking about. They made no such suggestion. There was, however, a suggestion as to revision of sentences. Let me read the recommendation of the Judges—

> "Such Court of Appeal should have power to revise a sentence on any person convicted of any criminal offence on application of the person convicted or the Attorney-General, and to confirm, or to increase, or to diminish the sentence."

That was the recommendation of the Judges. The proposal in this Bill is an absolutely new proposal. It reverses the whole legal industry of this country. I do not say that it is necessarily a conclusive argument against it. It removes from the people themselves—from the jury—the determining of guilt or innocence, and gives it to persons appointed by the Crown. That seems to me to be a very serious matter indeed. This is a rash experiment, and I must say, for my part, that I should be sorry to see the mode in which the administration of justice in this country has been hitherto conducted so seriously interfered with. I have had some experience myself as a criminal Judge, and my experience of the mode in which juries administer justice is that there is a most earnest desire to do right, and great reluctance, unless compelled to do so, to find a verdict of guilty. I believe this Bill, if passed into law, would most seriously interfere with the tone and spirit in which juries administer justice in this country.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, my noble and learned friend Lord Halsbury has extended considerable courtesy to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack in agreeing to the Second Reading of this Bill, but I think he will not be disposed to contradict me when I say that he is not foregoing the battle against it; he has only postponed the pitched battle which is to take place. I would ask your Lordships' permission to say a few words, a few very sincere words, in support of this Bill. Few things in my political life have given me greater pleasure than the prospect at last of seeing a real Court of Criminal Appeal in this country. As Attorney-General, and as a private Member, I have drawn three of these Bills in different directions. Fortune has been against me; but now, under the circumstances that exist in the other House of Parliament, it is to be hoped that, with your Lordships' sanction, this Bill will not only be considered, but will pass into law.

Let me ask, What ought to be the chief aim of our criminal law and its administration? It is no doubt to protect the community and to punish the wrong-doer. But I claim a higher duty than either of those—namely, that the law should take care that no innocent person suffers punishment. Let us see what safeguards we have in this country that innocent persons shall not unduly suffer. My noble and learned friend Lord Halsbury speaks, I think quite correctly, of the anxiety of our Judges to do their duty, and of the juries to find just verdicts; but they are not infallible, and those who have been in the Home Office know full well that many cases have arisen in which innocent persons have been convicted, and it must be obvious that there are a great number of such cases which are never known. We have a right, on behalf of our national character, to see that all is done under our machinery to secure that justice is administered.

We stand unique among civilised nations in that we will accept error without attempting to remedy it. We have no Court of Criminal Appeal. I think in every other civilised nation in Europe, and certainly in America, there are these Courts of Appeal; but, strangely enough, while we have no Court of Appeal we also have no Minister of Justice, whose duty it is, as in other nations, to see that justice is purely administered, and to take care of the accused as well as the prosecutor. Notwithstanding the absence of such a Minister, we now hear from a very high authority that it is better that things should remain as they are than that there should be set up a Court of Criminal Appeal. The best we can do at present is to see that the prerogative of mercy shall be exercised. But instead of leaving that to persons who have had the training and experience necessary to enable them to determine when that mercy should be exercised, we have of late years entrusted this duty to men who, however able they may be, have had no knowledge whatever of criminal proceedings. In the first place, the machinery of the Home Office is no tribunal at all. How a prisoner makes his application to the Home Secretary no one knows. He is never heard in person at the Home Office; no witnesses can be heard; no advocacy can take place. It is simply an inquiry, no doubt by men who thoroughly desire to act conscientiously and with justice to the accused persons, but it is not any approach to a determination by a properly constituted tribunal. Many of your Lordships will recollect the time when the Home Office represented great legal strength. Men of legal experience were always chosen as Home Secretaries. There were such men as Sir George Grey, Mr. Austin Bruce, and my noble friend Lord Cross. Then came men like Sir William Harcourt, Lord Llandaff, and Mr. Asquith. You could understand that those men were capable of seeing, by virtue of their experience, that justice was done. I remember one case in which a man was condemned for the murder of a woman in East London. Lord Llandaff instituted an inquiry, at which I was asked to be present, and I am confident in saying that no Judge could have made greater efforts to arrive at the truth than did the Home Secretary on that occasion. Now a change has taken place. I am speaking with the greatest respect of recent Home Secretaries, but what legal experience had Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Ritchie, and Mr. Akers-Douglas, or what legal experience has Mr. Herbert Gladstone had?

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Mr. Akers-Douglas has had experience at quarter sessions.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Yes, as chairman. These four gentlemen have represented in this country the only approach to a Court of Criminal Appeal; and I say that it is an insult to our judgment that we should be asked to accept that state of things as sufficient. I believe your Lordships are not aware of the number of innocent people who are convicted in this country. I know—for I was in consultation with him on the subject—that Sir William Harcourt made most diligent and conscientious inquiry into this question, and was convinced, after he had discharged, during the first three years that he was Home Secretary, twelve innocent men whose cases had come accidentally before him, that they represented only a few of the cases of innocent men who had been convicted.

My noble and learned friend Lord Halsbury has said that no authoritative declaration can be quoted in which the Judges have expressed themselves in favour of a Court of Criminal Appeal. I do not know that I have ever spoken in other than terms of the highest appreciation of the Judges of this country, but I must say they never have been legal reformers. They are more disposed to oppose reform than to support it. But there is an authority to be found. Very conspicuous Judges have been liberal and generous enough to see the necessity of such a measure as is now proposed. In 1889 a distinguished member of this House, Lord Fitzgerald, who must be remembered by many of your Lordships, appealed to my noble and learned friend who was then Lord Chancellor, to institute a Court of Criminal Appeal, and he based his arguments upon the Report of the Committee of 1878, consisting of Lord Blackburn, Mr. Justice Lush, and two other experienced Judges.

If my noble and learned friend will turn to the last sections of their Report he will find that the four Judges who sat on that Committee recommended an appeal upon questions of fact—an appeal against the verdict of the jury—with the qualification that it should be with the leave of the Court or Judge. That is a distinction, but still the infallibility of juries' verdicts was thrown over by these four Judges. Lord Fitzgerald, in an eloquent speech, appealed to my noble and learned friend on the subject, but his appeal was in vain. The late Lord Esher, who had been accidently absent when Lord Fitzgerald was speaking, wrote a a letter immediately, which appeared in *The Times*, and his view was—

> "The appeal should be as large as possible on law, facts, and sentence. The Judges should be bound in case of conviction and sentence of death, at any inconvenience to business, to attend in a court within seven days after any such appeal."

My noble and learned friend has described a jury as a constitutional tribunal. So it is. But my noble and learned friend does not hesitate to let a court overrule the finding of a jury in every civil case in this country, and, if they think right, they are entitled to enter a verdict of fact against the finding of the jury. Yet in the case where men are suffering all the torments of wrong conviction, and all the torture that men can suffer in this world, my noble and learned friend will do nothing for them, but wishes things to be left as they are. We may all approve of the exercise of conservatism to a certain extent, but surely we cannot steel our hearts against the demand that justice shall be done to all innocent men who are charged with crimes in this country.

There is one appeal I would make to your Lordships, which I hope will not be misunderstood. I think it is one that ought to receive attention. This House has trying times before it, and, under the present political conditions, we shall have measures brought before us which we individually may wish either to reject or to alter. We know the difficulty we shall have in determining whether we can exercise that power. But our power of resistance against such measures is but limited; we had better not waste it. I can tell your Lordships that this Bill is demanded by no political Party. Men have communicated with me on this subject over and over again. Lately I received as many as a hundred letters in connection with the conviction which crystallised this question, and I can say that it is the common sense of this country, and the feeling of justice of this country, which asks that this Bill should pass into law, and I therefore hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

EARL RUSSELL: My Lords, when I presided rather more than a year ago over a large public meeting at which a resolution was passed calling for the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal, I confess that I did not expect that within so short a time either Government would have brought forward so wide and comprehensive a Bill as the one which has been introduced to-day by the Lord Chancellor. I confess that I share a good many of the apprehensions which had been expressed by Lord Halsbury in regard to the question of criminal appeals. It is with a good deal of reluctance—reluctance which, I think, is somewhat instinctive when one regards the present criminal system—that I have been slowly driven to the conclusion which it would appear His Majesty's Government have now arrived at, that some Court of Criminal Appeal, I will not say for the moment how extensive, is necessary, and that the present system of revision of sentences by the Home Secretary, exercising his prerogative of mercy, does not give that full measure of justice and that full protection to innocent prisoners that is required by the law.

The tone of the Second Reading debate to-night has been one entirely on the general question. I understand that the noble and learned Lord in charge of the Bill wishes to leave the discussion of details until a later stage. But there appears to me, on looking carefully at the Bill, to be one or two points which are hardly explained by the Bill as it stands. I suppose that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has fully considered them. I do not see, for example, any provision for prisoners, who are to appeal under this Bill being either kept in custody or released pending the appeal. I am not clear as to whether they are to be required to give any sureties, or whether they can appeal without any consequences even of a pecuniary character. If there is to be a right of appeal in every case, it does seem to me that there will surely be a large number of appeals, because by appealing every convicted person will stand to gain a great deal more than he can possibly lose, if, indeed, he can lose anything; and considerable addition will also have to be made to the Judiciary of the country.

Then, I do not quite understand how far the Court is to sit as a sort of board and how far it is to sit as a Court. There is a provision in the Bill which is not perfectly clear as to the board not hearing or deciding these cases in public. I imagine that the judgment and the reasons for it will, at any rate, be given in public and in open Court. The question of appeal by criminals on matters of fact—matters of fact pure and simple—is a very difficult one, and I cannot help thinking that this provision will do something—it may not be much—to diminish the sense of responsibility under which juries at present arrive at a conclusion against the prisoner. There are some other provisions which will have to be added to this Bill if appeals are not to be universal and without reason. There seems to me to be no penalty at all. A convicted person has nothing to lose by an appeal under this Bill, and if he loses absolutely nothing the number of appeals will be such as to almost swamp the judicial business of the country. The fact that there is to be an appeal of a judicial character as against a consideration of a non-judicial character is to my mind a very great advance on the present law, and, so far, I most heartily welcome the Bill itself, and hope it will succeed ultimately in passing your Lordships' House without serious alteration in the objects at which it aims.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: May I say, in regard to the important question asked me by the noble Viscount as to the necessity of the Bill's providing in cases of murder for the hearing of the appeal without delay, that I heartily agree with him and will undertake to assent to any provision which he may propose to secure that object.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, this is also a Bill of great importance for which I anticipate a more propitious journey than appears likely in the case of the Bill which your Lordships have just read a second time, as feeling in favour of this measure is really unanimous on both sides of politics. As long ago as the year 1890 a measure of this kind was introduced by the noble and learned Earl who preceded me on the Woolsack, and it passed through your Lordships' House. I do not say that it was identical, nor that the scheme was framed in exactly the same way, but in substance it was not different from the Bill the Second Reading of which I am now moving. On the change of administration which subsequently followed there was a great desire in the House of Commons for such a measure, and a Select Committee, of which I was chairman, was appointed to consider the subject. We reported unanimously upon the necessity of some measure of this kind, and, in the vain hope that a system which works admirably in Scotland might be made to work also in England, we recommended the passing of a Judicial Trustee Bill. That Bill met with opposition from interested persons and was not passed by the Liberal Government. It was, however, passed by our successors in the year 1896, although mutilated, to some extent, on account of opposition. But it has not led to the good results that were expected. Sir Howard Vincent, who deserves the greatest credit for his unremitting efforts in this matter, for many years kept constantly pressing one Minister after another to do something in this direction, and at last, in the year 1905 a

Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Sir Howard Vincent which was practically supported by both sides. I, therefore, do not anticipate any unfavourable reception for this Bill.

I will now state to your Lordships the substance of the Bill, and the objects sought to be carried out. In all ranks and conditions of life it is difficult to get private persons to undertake the troublesome and unsatisfactory duties of trustee. But among the poorer classes it is almost hopeless to get people to administer their properties, which, though small, are of extreme importance to their families. Then, again, there is the uncertainty that when you place your money in the hands of a trustee you will ever see it again. There have been many cases of dishonest trustees. The temptation is very great to people in difficulties who are sole trustees to convert the money to their own uses, and as a consequence a great amount of distress has been caused. In the newspapers one constantly sees cases of that kind. We are very anxious to prevent that, and the Bill proposes that there shall be established the office of public trustee, with special facilities for the administration of small estates. In the case of other trusts, the public trustee may be appointed as custodian trustee, which means that the property of the trust shall be in his custody while its administration remains in the hands of the trustees appointed by the creator of the trust. There is also a provision by which the public trustee may be appointed in a will or any other deed as trustee for any kind of private trust. Of course it will be in the discretion of the public trustee to decline to take up any particular trust. It is also provided that any money lost by any omission or fault on the part of the public trustee shall be made good out of the public funds.

That is the scheme which we recommend to your Lordships. This is not a Bill directed against any particular profession. I believe that solicitors think that it is directed against them. Nothing of the kind, though, of course, there are black sheep in that flock as in every other. The only other observation I need add is that there are persons who look with the greatest apprehension on what they call officialism. I do not want to see officialism obtruded into private affairs more than is necessary, but I must say I think that nothing is more desirable than that some official should be responsible for carrying through affairs of this kind. I beg, therefore, to move the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I need hardly say that I heartily support the Bill, the Second Reading of which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has just moved, because for many years past I have been in favour of passing such a measure. As the Lord Chancellor has pointed out, very great difficulty is experienced in getting trustees. From my judicial experience I can say that if everybody knew the responsibility they undertook in becoming trustees there would be fewer trustees than there are. There can be no doubt that the public conscience has been shocked very much during recent years—I do not say whether the trustees belonged to one profession more than another, though a good many of them were solicitors—by the number of frauds committed by persons who have had trust funds to administer, and who have applied the money to their own use. Case after case of that sort has occurred within the last three or four years, and there is great need of a public trustee being appointed. I therefore heartily support the Second Reading of this Bill.

*LORD FABER: My Lords, though it is not my intention to oppose this Bill, I should not like to be taken as one who admits that the Bill is a necessity. The Bill is, in my opinion, a very much better measure than the one of last session which was not successful in getting through the House of Commons. I am afraid that a Bill of this kind will lead to concentration of business in London. The official trustee, I suppose, will reside in London, and it will be only natural, in those circumstances, that the business over which he has superintendence will be conducted in London. The country at present is suffering from the concentration of men and money, if I may put it in that way, in London. Again, as the noble and learned Lord has said, this Bill will create a new department with all its officialism and all its expense. In our very laudable desire to guard against fraud we shall be drifting, I fear, into officialism. Again, we shall want business men as officials if we can obtain them, and if we do not we shall find that occasional dishonesty is less costly than constant incapacity. We can insure against dishonesty, but we cannot insure against the incapacity of officials, and I confess I think it will be difficult to get capable officials. The Bill will require careful scrutiny in Committee. It was only placed in our hands yesterday. We have not had much opportunity of looking into its clauses, and I shall be glad, therefore, if the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack will assure us that the Committee stage will not be taken before Easter.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I should like to say one or two words in support of what has fallen from the noble Lord who has just sat down. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack informed the House that there was unanimity in favour of this Bill among the Leaders on both sides. Although there may be a consensus of opinion in favour of this Bill among political leaders, I can assure your Lordships that there is by no means unanimity in the commercial community. acknowledge that when Sir Howard Vincent first took up this question there was a strong case for an official trustee, but since then some of our most important banks and insurance companies have undertaken to act as trustees, and there is not now the same need for a Bill of this kind. I am not speaking from any interested point of view, because the firm with which I am connected have not taken up this business. This is, of course, part of that general system of transferring to Governments and to municipalities a great deal of business which has hitherto been carried on with great advantage to the community by private persons and by joint stock companies. The Bill has only just been distributed. Those who are interested in the matter have had no time to consider it, and I sincerely trust that His Majesty's Government will accede to the very reasonable request which has been made by my noble friend Lord Faber, and allow a reasonable time to lapse before taking the Committee stage, so that those who are engaged in this business may have an opportunity of considering the clauses of the Bill and the changes in the law which are proposed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, with regard to the request which has been made to me I can at once comply with it. I would remind the noble Lord Lord Faber that in the House of Commons last year the Bill which he thinks was worse than this Bill was so altered that it satisfied him, and he expressed his satisfaction with it in the other House. I hope we shall be able to satisfy him equally in regard to this Bill when we go into Committee.

On Question, Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

AMERICAN INSURANCE COMPANIES.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW rose to call attention to the recent disclosures as to the management of certain insurance companies in the United States having branch offices in this country, and to the laws of other countries and colonies affecting foreign insurance companies carrying on business there; and to ask His Majesty's Government whether they will take any steps to require that foreign companies carrying on business in England shall keep in this country such proportion of their assets as may suffice to meet claims that may be made on them by English policy holders.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I will endeavour to detain your Lordships for as short a time as I can consistently with putting before you the reasons why I think His Majesty's Government ought to take some steps to protect those who are insured in American insurance offices doing business in this country. Let me say, at the outset, that I am by no means desirous of pitting the methods of English companies against those of American companies. I remember too well that we have had cases in this country where great trusts have been administered with effects disastrous to those who entrusted their money to them, and I am not going to say, because I see a mote in the eye of brother Jonathan, that there is no beam in the eye of John Bull. Nor am I going to suggest for a moment that any of the companies carrying on business in this country are anything but absolutely solvent. I should greatly deprecate it if the result of any discussion here were to cause those who hold policies in American companies to throw them up in panic for fear they might not get full value for their money. Indeed, in the case of the worst company into whose affairs inquiry has been made, where the assets have been, to use an American phrase, "scaled down" to the very lowest, it has been shown that, in addition to the face value of the policies, there is a reserve of £12,500,000 sterling for unassigned surplus funds; that is to say, for deferred bonuses.

The system of deferred bonuses enables the accumulation of vast surpluses, and leads the officials of these offices into laxity of administration. Under the laws of the State of New York, and they are pretty much the same in all the States in America, there is practically no restriction on the class of security in which the managers may invest; it has thus been the custom to invest in subsidiary business corporations, necessitating sometimes advances of large sums of capital for the benefit of the shareholders in those corporations, while those shareholders have in many cases been the managers of the insurance companies themselves.

The three great companies carrying on business in this country are the New York Life, the Mutual, and the Equitable. I shall have to state to your Lordships some figures the size of which will be somewhat startling, but I want to give an idea of the enormous amount of money which is controlled by these institutions. These three companies have absolute possession of money or property to the extent of £200,000,000 sterling, and a ready cash surplus of almost £40,000,000 sterling. This is greater than the combined capital of the four greatest institutions in Europe, the Bank of England and the Banks of Russia, France, and Germany. On the last day of 1903 they had £227,000,000 of assets, but their business was increasing so rapidly that it was estimated that if it went on at only 50 per cent. of its then rate of increase, they would have in twenty-five years no less than £800,000,000 sterling to deal with. That enormous sum of money is practically at the disposal of four persons; it is or was at the disposal of the Presidents of the Mutual and the New York Life, and the President and Vice-President of the Equitable. By an ingenious system of exchange of proxies these gentlemen control the Mutual and the New York Life, while the Vice-President of the Equitable Society, holding 502 out of the 1,000 shares into which the capital of the company was divided, had the control of that company. The Vice-President gave a great ball, at which it was said that not all the dancing took place upon the floor, but some of it on the table, and that the proceedings were of doubtful morality—at any rate of doubtful taste; and the result was that the President and Vice-President began calling each other names, and, as usually happens when people of that kind fall out, honest men began to come by their own.

Two inquiries were held into the condition of the affairs of the Equitable Society, and the report was that the Vice-President had made large profits out of the Equitable funds; that he had erected buildings and leased them to companies in which he was interested at rents which turned out to be a loss to the Equitable; that he forced himself on the board of other companies; that he took a salary of £20,000 a year; and that he had been accustomed to buying a large amount of securities and involving the society in other important ventures without authority. In the case of the Mutual it was found that the President had voted himself a salary of £30,000 a year; that he had given £18,000 to what in this country I suppose we should call the Carlton Fund, and had given £40,000 to "oppose hostile legislation." That was the condition of affairs. What is the position now? As regards the Equitable it simply is that that gentleman has disposed of his 502 shares to another gentleman, a Mr. Ryan, who already has a large interest in the Mutual and controls another insurance office called the Washington, which does not do business here, for a sum of half-a-million sterling, and all that he has got for his £500,000 is 502 shares of £20 each, which cannot carry more than 7 per cent. interest. I leave your Lordships to judge whether so large a sum of money as that has been paid merely for the pleasure of owning 7 per cent. stock. I think it is quite clear that the position is no better now than it was before these disclosures were made.

I throw no doubt on the solvency of the companies, yet when it is made manifest that these irresponsible persons are able to dispose in the way they have done of the assets of the companies, we have no security in this country that they may not do the same thing on a much larger scale, and that the English policy holders may not wake up some morning to find that the whole of their assets have been dissipated. Since these charges have been made there have been several resignations in one of these offices in New York, and it was announced this morning that the manager of the Mutual, in this country, who for nineteen years, at great sacrifice and at great pains, has built up the business of that society, is so dissatisfied with the administration of affairs in New York that he has resigned his post. People in the prime of life do not throw up offices of that kind, carrying with it the salary of a Secretary of State, unless they are profoundly dissatisfied with what has taken place. I know there have been some attempts on the part on these companies to meet the object I have in view. I believe one of them, the New York Life, and also, I think, the Equitable, deposited a sum of money in the hands of trustees in this country, but, if I am correctly informed, it is only £100,000. What is £100,000 in comparison with the £15,000,000 which one company—the Mutual—alone is liable for to policy holders in this country?

I will not go through the laws of other countries on this subject. Suffice it to say that in almost every country—in France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, and also in Canada, there are most stringent laws, everyone of them providing that there shall be deposited in the country where the business is carried on a sum of money or securities, in some cases equal to the whole of the premiums which have been paid, in other cases to a certain proportion of those premiums, while in some cases there is a State control and State supervision over every action of the companies. In this country, however, we have scarcely any control whatever. Your Lordships are, perhaps, aware that under the Act of 1870, every company has to deposit a sum of £20,000, but as soon as it can show that it has assets of £40,000 or upwards, that deposit is immediately allowed to be withdrawn. Every company has to make an actuarial valuation of its liabilities and assets. That is done by the actuary to the company, and the assets are simply taken for what they may be worth; there is no possible way of making an accurate valuation of them. I submit to your Lordships that that is no security whatever for the cash being forthcoming whenever it may be called for by those who hold policies in the companies.

I am not concerned with anything that may happen to policy holders on the other side of the Atlantic; I am concerned with policy holders in this country only. One of these companies—the Mutual—has 26,000 policies, of which 20,000 are for £1,000 or under. The three companies, therefore, may reasonably be estimated to have out something like 40,000 policies, and if we put that at two persons interested in every £1,000 it gives us 80,000 policies. We may, I think, safely say that there at least three people—wives and children—besides the insured, who are interested in each of these, and, therefore, you get 240,000 English people —nearly a quarter of a million—who are interested in the affairs of American insurance companies carrying on business in England.

A great deal has been said of the encouragement of thrift, and of the duty of the State to provide old-age pensions; but, in the case of Insurance it is the outcome of the thrift of the country. It is the provision of old-age pensions and provision for widows and orphans, and I say we cannot in this country allow the slightest risk to those who have invested their savings in this form of insurance. I earnestly hope, now that these disclosures have been made, that His Majesty's Government will see their way to introduce legislation which will follow upon the lines of that adopted by nearly every other civilised country, including our own Colonies, and insist that any foreign insurance company carrying on business in this country shall deposit, either with trustees or in some other repository, approved assets which shall be sufficient to meet any liabilities that they may be called upon to meet by those British subjects who hold their policies.

*The Marquess of GRANBY: My Lords, the whole question of insurance has become such an important one that the matter referred to by the noble Earl cannot fail to prove of great interest. I shall only touch on the aspect of the question as it affects English offices. It is possible nowadays practically to insure anything. You can insure yourself against any risk, and I believe some insurance offices would almost undertake to insure the life of anything, including a Government. At the same time there is no doubt that some offices are a little apt, in the great rush that there is to get new business and to compete with their rivals, to produce very attractive schemes which often have most undoubted risks attached to them, and it is difficult to see how far we can legislate to prevent people being attracted by those gaudy proposals.

But I must say, speaking with all due deference to the noble Earl, that it does appear to me that there is one slight risk which might accrue if any legislation were initiated compelling foreign insurance companies to hold sufficient securities in this country to cover their liabilities to British policy holders. You might produce a certain retaliatory feeling, and it is possible that the large sums which some foreign countries compel English insurance companies doing business in those countries to have held in trusts and in securities abroad, might possibly, under such circumstances, be increased *pro rata*. But that is only a possibility. It does seem hard, I admit, on general grounds, that English insurance companies should be compelled to work abroad in some cases under arbitrary conditions.

I do not know that it really affects seriously the operations of English companies as regards their foreign fire insurances, but at the same time I would be glad if an inquiry into this matter were undertaken by His Majesty's Government, because it does open up a large matter. The question of insurance is becoming more and more important every day, and if an equitable method of dealing with the subject both as regards the business done by English companies working abroad, and by foreign companies who come over here to compete with English companies, could be arrived at, it would be a great advantage, taking into consideration the vast growth of the insurance business throughout the world.

The Earl of GRANARD: My Lords, I think the majority of your Lordships' will agree that it is not at all unreasonable to ask a foreign insurance company trading here to give some guarantee for the protection of the policy-holders in this country. In most foreign countries the same laws apply both for foreign and home companies. In France and Sweden there are separate laws for the foreigner. In the case of Germany the law is so very stringent that no foreign company whatever does any business in that country. The control that we have here is very small. Provided a company wanting to do business in this country places a sum of £20,000, with the Court of Chancery they can immediately commence business, but as soon as the policy fund reaches the sum of £40,000 they are at perfect liberty to withdraw the £20,000 originally placed in Chancery. There is one other condition we make. We insist on all companies publishing their accounts; but it is very hard to distinguish much from these, and especially with regard to foreign companies. We cannot tell how much business they actually do in this country. The Government have very carefully considered this matter, and they are of opinion that the best way to deal with it is by appointing a Select Committee. I hope to move the appointment of the Committee in a very short time, and I trust that this will meet the view of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees.

The Earl of ONSLOW: My Lords, I am very glad to hear that His Majesty's Government are going to take some action in this matter, because I think it is one of very great importance. I did not suppose that in the present state of public business it was likely that they would promise to bring in a Bill this session, and if they did, it is doubtful whether it would make any progress. Therefore, I welcome further inquiry into this subject. I think the public require a great deal more enlightenment. I am confident that the Select Committee will be efficiently manned, and I believe its Report will give satisfaction to the policy holders of whom I have been speaking.

LAND SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

*Lord LOVAT: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government their intentions (1) as to their policy in regard to land settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies; and (2) as to the steps they are to take to safeguard the interests of British farmers and others who have recently taken up land under the Land Settlement Ordinance in those Colonies.

I make no apology for bringing this matter forward at the present time, because in the popular excitement on the subject of another South African problem, namely, that of Chinese labour, the importance of the question of land settlement is apt to be lost sight of. I do not for a moment wish to argue that the number of settlers whom it would be possible to place on the land in South Africa will ever numerically compete with the number of Boers in those Colonies; but I do wish to argue—and it is an argument which has been put forward by all authorities who have studied South African affairs, from Mr. Cecil Rhodes downwards—that the putting of men on to the land, provided they are of the right kind, as British settlers, will have a tremendous effect in minimising the cleavage of interests urban and rural which exists between the Boers and the British, and which has intensified to such a great degree racial feeling. It is an admitted fact that individual Boers and Britons settled on the land have in times past got on very well together; also the effect during the late war of the Algoa Bay Settlement is well known. But for that settlement in the south-eastern portion of Cape Colony, South Africa would probably not be ours at the present day. In 1820 their number was only 5,000, but mainly from that body of settlers 24,000 men took part in the late war on the British side.

I wish to approach this question entirely from a non-political point of view. I bring it forward because I believe that His Majesty's Government have the interests of the loyalists in South Africa at heart, and have made up their minds that, whether the war was right or wrong, what we have got in South Africa we intend to hold, and that we shall not leave that country at the dictates of the Boers or at the wish of the capitalists, but that, if we do leave, it will only be at the wish of the majority of the loyalists in the country.

As to the question of land settlement, may I just briefly indicate the work that has been done, and the work that still remains to be done? As your Lordships are aware, the sum of £3,000,000 out of the £35,000,000 loan for which this country is responsible was devoted to land settlement. Of this £3,000,000 some £2,500,000 have been allocated, half to the Transvaal and half to the Orange River Colony; and £1,000,000 has been already spent in the Transvaal, and £1,250,000 in the Orange River Colony. There is left a balance of £500,000. I am well aware that many criticisms have been passed on the way in which the money has been administered. I am not going into details at the present moment, but I would like to point out that this money was administered at a time when a war which had lasted nearly three years had only just finished, and the land on which the settlers were put had been devastated, the dams broken, and the houses burnt. The administration had to be formed fresh absolutely from the start, and the work had to be carried out under every difficulty. I think it is fair to say that in the Orange River Colony it has on the whole been very well carried out. One-and-a-quarter million has been expended, of which £1,000,000 has been spent in land, and about £200,000 in permanent improvements, only the sum of from £40,000 to £60,000 having been expended in administration. The land has been well bought, and the settlers appear to be well satisfied.

In the Transvaal undoubtedly the difficulties have been greater, and I believe that the administration was not quite so good, but still excellent results have been attained, and some 600 settlers have been put on the land. There has been much hostility on the part of the Boer newspapers to putting British settlers on the land, but the statements made in those newspapers cannot in any way be accepted. It may be said that the number of settlers placed upon the land as a result of this expenditure of £2,500,000 is not large. That the settler themselves only number 1,200 is true; but many of them have with them eight or ten or twelve Britons on their farm, and therefore the number of persons affected is nearer 2,000 than 1,200. Again, a large number of men have settled alongside those who have been put on the land under the Land Settlement Ordinance, and therefore it can be argued that this expenditure of £2,500,000 has really resulted in the settlement of between 2,000 and 3,000 men on the land.

That the cost is considerable it will be at once admitted, but it must be remembered that the £1,750,000 which has been, or is being put into the purchase of land is repayable; and, secondly, that the cost of the permanent improvements, which also formed part of this investment, is repayable by the settlers. Those repayments are now being made, and I contend that this money should be reinvested in land. That the majority of the settlers are prosperous and contented, I think, will be admitted, firstly, because when revaluation of the land was proposed the other day in the Orange River Colony it was opposed by a very much larger number than were in favour of revaluation. And secondly, it is a known fact that when land becomes vacant by a settler leaving it is at once taken by new settlers. Undoubtedly some of the settlers have failed, but that is bound to be the case in settling a new country. The settlers had to start afresh, and in addition they suffered from three years of drought.

Now, my Lords, the question is, are the Government going to abandon the work done, and are they going to desert those settlers who at present are endeavouring to find their feet in the colony? Among the British settlers there is an idea that they are going to be deserted. They have in their memories what took place in 1881, when the loyalists who fought on our side lost their all after Majuba through the land being given back to the Boers. There are many persons who come forward to-day and tell those settlers that what was done in 1881 may be done again at the present day. I do not wish to speak in exaggerated language and to say that the handing over of these men to a Constitutional Government is going to amount to anything like what happened in 1881. But the facts of the situation have to be faced as they exist. In the Orange River Colony it must be remembered out of thirty-six representatives in the assembly to be created six British representatives are the most that they can expect. I need only ask you to read the statements that are made in the Boer Press with regard to these settlers, if you wish to know the policy which will be carried out towards them should they be handed over to the control of the Boers.

I suggest to His Majesty's Government that the administrative work should be continued, that the Land Settlement Ordinance and the board should be continued in its action for a time, at all events, and until the men who have been settled on the land have enjoyed an opportunity to overcome the troubles under which they have laboured in the past. I would further urge that the £500,000 unexpended in land settlement should also be used to carry on this work, and in the main should be used for settling men in the Orange River Colony, where experience has shown that the land is most suitable for British settlers. I also suggest that a certain portion of the £10,000,000 underwritten or guaranteed by the mining magnates should be asked for. As your Lordships are aware, grave doubts have been expressed as to whether we shall see any of that £10,000,000. I would suggest that at all events a compromise should be made with the mine owners for a portion of this sum to be invested in land settlement and permanent improvement.

Mr. Smutz and Mr. Delaray claimed the other day that this money should be given to the Boers for re-settlement on the land; but, if you examine the facts, you will see that although only £3,000,000 has been expended in the settlement of the British on the land, £9,500,000 has been expended on the Boers and others in South Africa to put them back on the land under the terms of surrender. Would it not be fair that an arrangement should be made to continue, by the aid of a portion of this underwritten money, the policy of land settlement for Britishers? I am aware that this £10,000,000 should come to the British people as a contribution towards the cost of the war, but I think it would be an excellent investment on the part of the people of this country if they devoted it to land settlement. The policy of land settlement is a preventive against future trouble in the Orange River Colony. In the first place, it would secure the possibility of cutting down military expenditure there. We have at present a garrison of 20,000 men in South Africa, and there seems to be little chance of cutting that garrrison down until things are in a more settled state than they are at present. I think no man who is acquainted with South Africa will deny that settlers who have been trained in war and are properly armed will be a much more valuable fighting asset in the Colony than the ordinary soldier from the barrack yard. The cost of a soldier in South Africa is, roughly, £125 a year; the placing of Britons on the land would be much less costly.

I have found that the feeling between Boer and Briton has been much improved wherever these land settlements exist. The affection, I might almost say, which has in many places grown up between them is most marked as a result of these land settlements. Again, on the score of numbers, out of 10,000 farms in the Orange River Colony over 2,000 are occupied by British settlers, and the addition of a few thousand settlers, which could be brought about, would make, if not absolute equality of power, at least a fair representation of the British element in the Colony. At present throughout South Africa you have the British dominant in the towns and the Boers supreme in the country. The interests of the country are often subordinated to those of the towns, and race hatred is thereby increased, because the interests between Boer and Briton are so divergent.

The whole of South Africa to-day looks to see whether the present Government are going to declare themselves pro-Boer or pro-Briton in their sympathies. I say this in no spirit of partisanship, but in any action taken as yet by the Government there has been no indication that it is on the side of the loyalists. I would cite the action of the other House of Parliament against a great public servant who has been closely identified with South Africa and the appointment of a Commission, with two of the terms of reference hostile to British interests, as facts that will hardly appeal to those in these Colonies as being favourable to the loyalist movement. Some definite action should therefore be taken by His Majesty's Government to show, as I believe, that they are in favour of the loyalists in South Africa.

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER: My Lords, in rising to address your Lordships for the first time, I claim that indulgence which I believe is always extended to one in that position. I am anxious to say a few words on the subject of land settlement in South Africa for several reasons—first, on account of my personal and close connection with South Africa and with the Orange River Colony in particular; secondly, and chiefly, from the Imperial point of view of settling Englishmen in the country; and, thirdly, because of the bright prospects—which anyone who has had the opportunities I have had of closely observing the country cannot fail to have noticed—which exist there for agriculturists. These prospects are going to be of primary importance if given some encouragement.

In addition to schemes of farm colonies, as indicated by Lord Lovat, I would suggest that irrigation schemes should be started to give opportunities of close settlements, or, in other words, of a large number of settlers settling on small plots with common pasturage, which has been tried with success in many parts of the Orange River Colony. I mention irrigation, because one of the chief difficulties the settler has to contend with is the three months dry season during the winter. Irrigation, the building of dams, and the sinking of wells would to a great measure tend to relieve settlers of these difficulties. As regards well-sinking, springs have been found in apparently impossible places. I know of several places where water has been procured at a depth of twenty-five feet, and the amount of water procured has usually been from 40,000 to 50,000 gallons per diem.

Owing to the railway extensions made by the present administration in the Orange River Colony, the value of land in many districts has much appreciated. I trust, therefore, that His Majesty's Government will continue and extend this policy, as it tends above all things to open up markets in the rural districts. From what I have seen recently of the Dutch and English around my farms in the Orange River Colony, where I have settled over twenty families, the relations between the two races appear to be excellent. I have had many opportunities of witnessing it; for instance, the friendly way in which Dutchmen will give hints to and help the English settler who has just gone out there, and who naturally at that period wants some advice. I may here point out the advantages that the English settler will have over the late Dutch settlers. Dutchmen before the war were merely content with scratching the surface of the land, and, therefore, raising a bare livelihood. The Englishman, with his knowledge of agriculture, his modern implements, and his desire for work, could, without much difficulty, once he is settled there, treble the amount produced by the Dutchman. Taking these facts into account these settlers are, I think, worthy of help.

I would urge upon your Lordships to commence first with the present settlers who have overcome so many difficulties caused by the inconvenience of farming after the country had been denuded by the war, and I suggest that they should not be deserted and left to the tender mercies of a Boer Government. I further suggest, my Lords, that the Board and its present efficient administration should be continued in its excellent work. There are many loyal Englishmen in South Africa who are ready to carry out the wishes of the mother country as long as those wishes are adequate to keep her first in the field of colonising nations. The country in question is one that has been gained by the blood of our kith and kin. Therefore, let us combine to make the South African question a national one. I do hope that the question of land settlement will not be given over to the possible Government of the Orange River Colony, but will be kept for some time in the hands of the Colonial Office.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I am sure that your Lordships have listened with great interest to the speeches which have just been delivered by the two noble Lords. They have both had the courage of their convictions, and have taken a great practical interest in this work in the South African Colonies; and I might be allowed also to express what I am satisfied is the gratification of your Lordships at the appearance once more in our debates of the name of the noble Duke who spoke last. I am in rather an unusual position this evening. It is generally the case that a Minister is called upon, often at very short notice, to give an amount of information on very complicated matters; but in this case I come rather to hear from the noble Lords an account of the work which they have taken part in and which they have done so well.

The noble Lord who spoke first disclaimed any intention of speaking on Party grounds. That is the way in which I think this question should be looked at. I rather regret that in one part of his speech he used expressions which scarcely carried out the spirit in which he began. I must decline, with all respect to him, to follow him into the problem of deciding whether the Government are or are not a loyalist institution. I prefer myself in this connection simply to refer to the remark of the noble Duke, when he spoke of the good and friendly relations he had found between the two races in South Africa on the farms with which he was connected. I think that is a good augury for the future.

Noble Lords will agree that in this matter of land settlement very much depends on the quality of the settlers themselves. If we have men who by birth, education, or sentiment have an interest in and a capacity for farming, I imagine that in South Africa, as in this country, we are likely to have a successful issue. But even then you require favourable surroundings. I suppose it is necessary for the success of the settlers the noble Lord has in view to have a well-watered farm, of moderate size, and I understand from papers which have I seen that the association with which the noble Lord is connected is able to give further advantages to the settlers he takes out in the way of a certain training before they take up business on their own account. That is of very great advantage to the settlers, and one which we might suppose would lead to good results.

But I think the noble Lord will also agree that all the settlers have not been of the class to which I have referred. I rather gather from the papers that at the beginning of this enterprise the Government found themselves with a considerable number of applicants who had served during the war, and, therefore, naturally came up for consideration, and who yet were not men of the class of whom I have spoken, connected in their former history with the tillage of the land, and in some of these cases there has not always been a success. I understand the noble Lord advocated a scheme for the future in which we should again look to the Army for settlers. I can only say that unless these men coming from the Army really have capacity for agriculture I am rather inclined to think they will hamper the success of your operations.

*LORD LOVAT: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Earl, but I did not at all advocate that men should be taken from the Army. What I wished to bring out was the fact that something like 75 per cent. of the men now settled on the land actually fought during the war. I have no statistics to prove this, but the people mostly interested and therefore most likely to know have given me this information. I am also aware that there are a very large number of people with war service ready to take up land who have had experience of farming.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I am glad to hear that so many of the settlers capable of doing the land justice are soldiers who served in the war. The difficulties of the land settlement as a whole are not inconsiderable. It appears that although the Government were nominally in the possession of as many as 20,000,000 acres, the greater part of the land lay on the eastern and northern boundaries of the Colonies, remote both from markets and railways. There is also a distinction between wet and dry land, and, though much can be done, as the noble Duke pointed out, by irritation, it involves a large amount of expenditure. The consequence has been that large purchases of land suitable for settlement had to be made. Land has been purchased in the Orange River Colony to the value of £850,000 and in the Transvaal to the value of £500,000. All that has affected considerably the prospects that were entertained when the scheme of land settlement was first propounded.

The noble Viscount on the cross benches, Lord Milner, in his despatch of 1902, made the proposal that £3,000,000 should be taken from the guaranteed loan and devoted to this purpose, and he estimated that for that amount of money 3,000 settlers were to be put on the land, which meant an expenditure by the State of £1,000 per settler. The amount actually allocated was not so much. In the Transvaal the amount was £1,200,000 and in the Orange River Colony the amount was £1,100,000. But I find that of these sums no less than £1,350,000 has been spent in the purchase of land. In the Orange River Colony to June 30th last year 1,108,521 acres had been purchased for an outlay of £845,000. Practically every acre of that land available for allotments to settlers has been taken up and remains occupied, and there are a large number of other persons desirous of becoming settlers who cannot be accommodated, as there are no funds available for further purchases.

The actual settlers number 700 heads of families, of which 598 are British and 102 Dutch. These figures do not include a certain number of oversea and other men of British birth who are settled on the land without proprietary rights. I cannot say that the results have been quite comparable with the anticipations with which the scheme was started. The expenses have been greater. Besides the purchase money, the direct monetary loss to the Government must be calculated on the basis of 50 per cent. of the purchase price of the land, this being the amount spent on free improvements.

*LORD LOVAT: May I ask whether that 50 per cent. does not refer to the Imperial South African Association Settlement? It does not refer to the whole bulk of the settlers, but to the South African Association settlers, who are only a very small percentage of the whole.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: Possibly that is so. But the settlers are fewer in number than was anticipated, while the expenses have been greater. The noble Lord asked me to consider how the repayments from the settlers were to be dealt with, and whether there could not be some scheme for continuing the fund by means of these repayments. I am not prepared at this moment to give a definite answer to that question. There are various difficulties in connection with the interpretation of the Ordinance and other matters. Besides, I venture to think that the subject cannot be fairly dealt with in anticipation of the future Government of the colony.

I hope the noble Lords will not think I have taken up a wholly unsympathetic attitude in regard to this matter. I think that land settlements, when they are successfully carried out, are of great advantage. I think so the more because I find that the Government in South Africa is not confining its attention altogether to the promotion of land settlement, but has set up a very large Agricultural Department, which is engaged, in many different directions, in promoting the improvement of agriculture in that country. The Report of the Director of the Agricultural Department is a book of some dimensions. I have had the advantage also of an interview with the present director, Mr. Smith, and have learnt from him how much there was done and how much prospect there is of doing further good work.

The old *regime* in these Colonies was full of antiquated methods, if, indeed, they could be called methods at all. Farming was chiefly pastoral, and except for some small portion of land around the homesteads, there was very little cultivation, and that was not because there was no land worthy of cultivation, as the operations of the noble Lords have shown. Besides that, there was very little attention paid by the farmers of former days even to the pastoral side of farming. They knew very little as to the best means of improving their stock. Therefore the action which the Government has taken in establishing an Agricultural Department has led, I believe, to considerable improvement. If I may just quote some of the heads which are already undertaken, the House will see that the agricultural side of the matter is not being neglected by the Government. The object of the Agricultural Department is to instruct public opinion with regard to agriculture, the conduct of experiments, experimental farming, forestry, the combating of pests and disease, the improvement of the breed of cattle and horses, and to educate the farming classes generally. One of the great difficulties we find in the Transvaal is the high cost of living; and consequently this improvement in the production of agricultural products will ultimately be of great benefit to the community.

I am afraid I cannot give specific answers to the two Questions which the noble Lord put on the Paper. As to the position of the settlers, they have a definite legal *status*, and I cannot suppose that that legal *status* will be affected by any arrangements which may be made, or by any Government which we desire to see established in the Transvaal. But if the noble Lord asks me to go further than that and tell him whether under the new Constitution there could be reservations on behalf of the settlers under the land settlement scheme, I can only say that a question of that kind is premature until we have obtained the information we desire in order to frame the Constitution itself. The noble Lord also makes a suggestion in regard to the possibility of obtaining assistance for the scheme of land settlement from the loan, which has been variously named, but the proper name of which I think is the war contribution. It was intended to be a contribution towards war expenses incurred by this country. I do not know whether the particular method which the noble Lord suggests would exactly meet that end; but I do not say that it would not be a very excellent opportunity for those who have been able to make fortunes out of South Africa to show that they have an interest in the future of that country.

*VISCOUNT MILNER: My Lords, in venturing to address the House after the sympathetic speech of the noble Earl, I do most earnestly beg that I may not be regarded as desiring to cause any trouble to the Government or to impart any bitterness or any unnecessary alarm into the discussion of the South African situation. I should like most sincerely to thank the noble Earl for the tribute which he has paid to the Agricultural Department of the Transvaal. To those of my countrymen who have worked desperately hard during the last few years to introduce better methods of farming into the Transvaal, and that mainly in the interest of the Dutch who form the majority of the population, it has been a subject of legitimate distress that in all the discussions that have taken place about South Africa their useful efforts have been very largely ignored. In fact, I do not remember any reference to the subject in any discussion that has taken place in this country, until the sympathetic words that have just fallen from the noble Earl.

I hold in my hand the *Agricultural Journal* of the Transvaal, which gives some account of the vast amount of work —both official and unofficial—which is being done. I have sometimes asked gentlemen more acquainted with agriculture than I am myself to give me their opinion of that publication and the work to which it refers. I am glad to say that I have been told by high authorities that it is as good as, if not better than, any work of the kind produced in any of our Colonies, although this is a Colony which has been only three or four years in the British Empire. In all the discussions that have taken place on this subject in this country, I do not think the vast amount of earnest effort which has been directed to this particular matter of improving this industry, which is the life of the majority of the dwellers on the land— this industry by which the Colonies will have mainly to live after the mines have been exhausted—has been at all sufficiently appreciated.

The noble Earl was sympathetic with regard to the work done for the promotion of agriculture generally, but he was barely sympathetic with regard to the question of land settlement. He will forgive me for saying that in the statistics he gave to the House, he, I am sure accidentally, did not give land settlement quite as fair treatment as it deserved. I think he said there was a loss of something like 50 per cent. He will be glad I am sure if I am able to point out that the real loss on an expenditure of something like £2,200,000 which took place up to June 30th last, was only £200,000, and that only in one colony, the Transvaal. In the Orange River there has been an expenditure of £1,200,000, and there is good reason for supposing that every penny of that will come back. Speaking in round figures, I find that in addition to the £850,000, which has been invested in the purchase of land at a rate so reasonable that the settlers on it have lately decided not to apply for a revaluation, there has been something like £150,000 invested in live-stock and improvements to the land, including expenditure on water boring, which has had successful results, and which is added to what the settlers have to repay, something like £100,000 has been given in cash advances to settlers, while the rest is largely accounted for by other improvements, such as the commencement of certain expenditure on irrigation.

I say that in the Orange River Colony the whole of the £1,200,000 expended is likely to come back. In the Transvaal I read in the latest Report of the Commissioner of Lands that he estimates there is value to the extent of £600,000 in land purchased, £200,000 in capital advanced to the settlers, and other assets, and that the loss in the Transvaal on this experiment amounts to only £200,000. That, too, was a loss incurred almost entirely in respect of a class known as squatter settlers—ex-irregulars, whom pressure of public opinion both here and in the colony compelled us to settle on the land immediately after the war, although the conditions were not favourable to such settlement, and although these men were not the sort of settlers we should have selected if we had had a free hand, and not the sort who are being selected under the careful methods of to-day.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: I was wrong in regard to the 50 per cent. loss. I see that the noble Lord is correct in his version.

*VISCOUNT MILNER: I am glad the noble Earl recognises that. I felt sure it was merely an accidental mistake on his part. I would close this part of the discussion by simply saying that, as one of the first and one of the most ardent believers in the policy of land settlement, I thank the noble Earl for his sympathetic attitude. Now, I am sorry if I have to introduce into this discussion what may be regarded as a discordant note, and expose myself once more to the charge of speaking not merely in a Cassandra-like spirit, but in a somewhat bitter spirit. There is nothing I am more anxious to do than to avoid this. I recognise the good will of the noble Earl, and I do not want to create difficulties for him in the great and arduous task which he has before him. But if I am to help him I must tell the House quite frankly what I know. And what I know is this—that the policy of land settlement, the position of the settlers at present on the land, and the future of the experiment is in great and imminent danger, and that if special provisions are not made in the constitutional arrangements which are before us, not only will this great and beneficial work of land settlement be absolutely stopped, but the majority of those men at present on the land, I am speaking of the Orange River Colony, will be squeezed out. I wish to support that statement by one or two authorities. The noble Earl says these men have got their legal rights, and it is not to be supposed that, whatever constitutional arrangements are made, they will be in any danger. It is true they have their legal rights; but it is also true that, if these new settlers, who have to contend with all the difficulties he has pointed out, have not in the first years of their struggle a sympathetic and helpful administration that will give them time and not press for instalments in years when they have met with serious and exceptional misfortunes, their position is an absolutely unsafe one.

Now, what is the feeling of the settlers themselves about this matter? Not so very long before I left South Africa the Administration, which, of course, at that time was thoroughly sympathetic to the settlers, was making certain advances to the settlers in the Orange River Colony for the purpose of purchasing sheep, which they were to repay in five years, an experiment which I am glad to say has proved so far a very successful one. The deputation of settlers which interviewed the Government on the subject was headed by one of the most energetic and capable of the settlers, chosen by themselves, and in the course of the discussion he made the following remarks, which I am quoting from the official shorthand note which was taken at the time. He said—

> "There is one other matter which appears to the settlers as one of the gravest importance to their interests. Suppose Government makes this grant and another Government comes into power at home and the Orange River Colony is given responsible government, what will be the position of the settlers? The land settlement scheme will meet with very great opposition. The settlers would like to see this Government place land settlement on a sound basis, so that it will be beyond the power of any representative Government to oust them from their holdings. They are all of opinion that if self-government is granted to the Orange River Colony in the near future it will be a lamentable mistake. If I can go back to the settlers and tell them that there is going to be no change, that any change of Government cannot affect their interests in any way, if I can say that they must just go on as best they can, being assured of the sympathy of the Government and that grace will be given to them until good times come, then I know that the men will be satisfied to go on and do their level best. But these men are sensible enough to know that they will receive not the slightest consideration when responsible government comes."

That was the feeling of a representative man among the settlers little more than a year ago. What is their feeling to-day? I have here a letter—one of the many painful and distressing letters which reached me by my last South African mail—in which the writer says—

> "After all, England has sacrificed and suffered for the Orange River Colony. It is, indeed, hard if the Dutch are to be put in power; for, however much Ministers in England may hope and expect, it will bring about bitter feeling between the two nations. It will mean that the English will have to trek. It spells ruin to the very people who in time would be the greatest factor in making the colony both loyal and prosperous. Would there be any use in the English people appealing to the King? If there was any idea of treating the Boers in the way it is contemplated to treat the British, most of whom fought for their country, the whole world would be flooded with their abuse and recriminations. It is already suggested that the new constitution must safeguard the black population; but hundreds, nay thousands, of English men, women and children may be complacently abandoned to starvation. Hope to the contrary will be as much use as if a man pushed another who could not swim, into deep water and calmly trusted he would not drown."

I make every allowance for the state of alarm in which these people are, and I make every allowance for a certain amount of exaggeration; but another letter which reached me by the same mail, and which comes also from the Orange River Colony and from a Government official familiar with the conditions of many of the settlers, says—

> "The prospect before the settlers is dark. If the Government were to foreclose the great majority of them could not weather the storm."

I press this upon the Government now that there is time, in order that they may avoid steps which would lead to disaster. The position is this. I entirely agree with the noble Duke that there is a good feeling between the individual Dutch farmer and the English farmer settled side by side with him upon the land. There is very often good feeling; there is a growing tendency towards good feeling. That is the reason why some of us are so intensely keen to see the settlement of British people on the land. We know that they will never be more than a small proportion, that the majority must be Dutch; but we feel that the introduction of a British element to the land brings British people into closer relations and closer touch with the Dutch people than is possible in the towns, and forms a valuable link between the two. Not only do they come to regard the Dutch with greater sympathy, but they create in the Dutch greater sympathy with Englishmen than they would otherwise feel.

Even to-day, when the difficulties are great and when memories of the war have not yet died out, and when for many reasons the experiment is being tried under unfavourable conditions, there is a growing good feeling between the British settlers and their Dutch neighbours. But I say with deep regret, yet again with absolute conviction, that that good feeling between individuals, on which we are justified in resting so much hope, is not going to save the British settlers from hostile executive action in a country in which they may have few representatives or no representatives in the Legislature. It will not save them, because the policy of the dominant party, or rather the policy of the men whom for the next ten or twenty years the Dutch Afrikanders will follow and return to power and support in power, is a policy directly hostile to the settlers and is so openly declared.

The language used by the leading Dutch newspapers is language of bitter hostility to the plan of land settlement, which they wrongly regard as an attempt to swamp the Dutch, whereas it is an attempt to introduce a new and valuable element on the land which shall form a link with the Dutch. It is an absolute certainty that these settlers have got to face in the Orange River Colony—I am not speaking of the Transvaal, where their position is a safer one—hostile executive action in future. Therefore, although I could not expect the noble Earl to say more than he has said to-night on the subject, I would most earnestly submit the consideration of this question to him and to the Government in order that they may make some provision to protect these men, liable as they are to be ousted by a hostile executive. I beg them to take that to heart.

And let me assure them that there is no single act which could be done by this Government, especially if they are going to give complete responsible government at once to the Orange River Colony—there is no single act which would be more calculated to reassure the British minority, who may possibly not have a single representative in the new Legislature, than if the Government took steps for the protection of this population on the land. Surely it is not a difficult thing to do. What is to prevent the Government, while giving if they please—and the Government know that I think it a rash proceeding—full and responsible government to the Orange River Colony, from maintaining the Land Settlement Board for a certain number of years as a branch of the British administration and under the Colonial Office? What objection is there to their cutting out, as it were, this little corner of the administration and keeping it under their own control, and so ensuring that these settlers shall continue to receive that sympathetic and considerate treatment without which it is certain that many of them will go to the wall?

Nothing can possibly be calculated to start responsible government under more favourable circumstances than any act on the part of the Government at home which would show its recognition of the difficulties of these people and its desire to protect them. Even if their fears were groundless—and I am convinced that they are not—the fact of the Government here extending its protecting hand to them at a time like the present would be one not only reassuring to them but most reassuring to the whole British minority in the colony. That minority is at the present moment in a state of the greatest anxiety and alarm. There can be no doubt of it whatever; and, if that anxiety and alarm continue, they will prove of the greatest difficulty to the Government in any scheme it may submit to Parliament. Proper consideration of this land settlement and proper protection of the settlers on the land would be more than anything else conducive to the good reception of fresh constitutional arrangements in the Orange River Colony. I hope I may be acquitted, for once, of having imported anything like bitterness into the discussion in trying to impress on the Government the great seriousness of the question and the magnitude of the issue involved.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 27th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DUBLIN, WICKLOW, AND WEXFORD RAILWAY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.

To be read a second time to-morrow.

ADDITIONAL ELECTRICAL POWER SUPPLY (LONDON) BILL (BY ORDER).

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committtee:—

1. " That, in the case of the Poole Water, Petition for leave to deposit a Petition for a Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to deposit their Petition for a Bill."

2. " That, in the case of the Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clause 27 be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. " That, in the case of the Channel Ferry Railway and Quay (Dover) Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

4. " That, in the case of the West Yorkshire Tramways Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 10 be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

5. " That, in the case of the Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways (No. 2) Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramway No. 3B be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

6. " That, in the case of the Cork Link Railways Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the Great Western Railway Company, the London and North Western Railway Company, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, the Cork Bandon and South Coast Railway Company, the Cork Blackrock and Passage Railway Company, the Cork and Macroom Direct Railway Company, and the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Council of the County of Cork and the Corporation of the City of Cork be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

7. " That, in the case of the Cork and Waterford Railways Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers of subscription proposed to be conferred upon the London and North Western Railway Company, the Great Western Railway Company, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, the Dublin Wicklow and Wexford Railway Company, the Cork Bandon and South Coast Railway Company, and the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company, and the powers of subscription and guarantee proposed to be conferred upon the County Councils of the Counties of Cork and Waterford be struck out of the Bill, except where proof is given before the Committee on the Bill that Special Meetings of any or all of the said Companies have been held to consider the Bill, or that the Bill has been submitted to and approved by either or both of the said County Councils:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

Resolutions agreed to.

CORK LINK RAILWAYS BILL.

Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time.

CORK AND WATERFORD RAILWAYS BILL.

Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill ordered to be read a second time.

HUDDERSFIELD CORPORATION BILL.

Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the granting of superannuation allowances to the officers and servants of the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Bethnal Green; and for other purposes," [Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain letters patent granted to Samuel Mathews Vauclain for an invention for improvements in compound steam locomotives." [Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the conversion of the stock of the Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Company Limited into five per annum cumulative preference stock, preferred ordinary stock, and deferred ordinary stock; and for other purposes." [Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer additional powers upon the Hull Joint Dock Committee for the construction of dock works, and upon the North Eastern Railway Company for the construction of new railways; and for other purposes." [Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords.]

Sunday Trading, That they propose that the Joint Committee, appointed to inquire into the subject of Sunday Trading, do meet in Committee Room A on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock.

Bethnal Green Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Vauclain's Patent Bill [Lords]; Antofagasta (Chili) and Bolivia Railway Bill [Lords]; Hull Joint Dock Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law; From Albrighton; Arthingworth; Ash; Aston cum Aughton (two); Berkley; Birtley (two); Bloxham (two); Box; Brompton; Bury (two); Buxhall; Carsington; Chelwood; Chertsey; Claverley (two); Clipston; Codford St. Mary; Compton; Corston; Courteenhall; Crewkerne (two); Crunwere (two); Darley Abbey (two); Dean; Doddington; Dowlish; Dunton; Eakring; East Hendred; Edgcott (two); Elton; Fordwich (two); Foxley (two); Fressingfield; Great and Little Woolston (two); Halton Shields; Hambledon; Haslebury Bryan; Heaton; Heaton Norris (three); Hindsford; Holy Trinity, Kilburn; Hopton and Griffs Grange; Hordle (two); Hornby (two); Howtel; Hucclecote; Huntley; Kirknewton (two); Leaton; Leigh Delamere; Lever Bridge (two); Lillingstone Lovell (two); Longton (two); Luccombe; Ludgershall (two); Margaretting; Marston Trussell; Maften; Milton Bryan; Milton Keynes (two); Monk Hesleden; Netherton; North Frodingham (two); Pertenhall (two); Pittington (two); Poling (two); Portbury; Prestwich; Ramsbottom; Rodington; Rousham; St. Anne's, Stretford; St. John's, Dukinfield (two); St. Peter's, Cricklewood; Shabbington; Shere (two); Shilbotel; South Ossett (two); Snowshill; Stanton; Stowe (two); Studland (two); Sturry (two); Stinchcombe; Sunnybrow; Swainswick; Tattingstone; Thornbury; Tirley; Tynemouth Priory; Upton Lovell;

Upper Slaughter; Wem (two); West Brompton; West Knoyle; Weston; Wickham; Wigginton; Willen; Willington; Winchester (three); and, Woolstone; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ALIENS NATURALISATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 13th March; *Mr. Herbert Samuel*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 93.]

MEDICAL COUNCILS.

Accounts presented, for 1905 of the General Medical Council and Branch Councils, and of the Dental Registration Fund [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Barnstaple, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' Shops within the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS AT PRICES OF 1900.

Copy presented, of Tables showing for each of the years 1900–5 the estimated value of Imports into the United Kingdom, and Exports from the United Kingdom, of articles of British and Irish production at prices prevailing in 1900, with an introductory Memorandum [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MANUFACTURED IMPORTS AND EMPLOYMENT.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th March; *Mr. Bowles*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 94.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901 (HOME WORK.)

Address for "Return as to the administration, in each county and county borough during 1904, by the local authorities of the Home Work provisions of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, as shown by the reports of the medical officers of health sent to the Home Office under Section 132 of the Act, giving particularly the following information: (*a*) generally, the number of inspections of home-workers' premises, the number of notices served in respect of them, etc.; (*b*) the number of out-workers' lists received by the local authority under Section 107, and the number of outworkers shown by them; (*c*) the number of notices served by the local authority under Section 108; (*d*) the number of orders made by the local authority under Section 110; (*e*) the number of cases of infectious disease notified in home-workers' premises; (*f*) the number of cases of non-compliance, and the number of prosecutions, under Sections 107, 108, 109 and 110 respectively; and (*g*) the number of medical officers reporting specially on the administration of those sections."—(*Mr. Ramsay Macdonald*).

EXPORTS TO CHINA AND SOUTH AMERICA.

Return ordered, "showing, so far as can be stated: (1) the Exports to China, inclusive of Hong Kong, from the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States, for the years 1885 to 1904, and the average for each of the quinquennial periods ending 1889, 1894, 1899, and 1904, showing increase in value and percentage between the averages for the first and last periods; (2) a similar Return for the same periods, showing exports to Argentina from the same countries; and (3) a similar Return showing exports from the same countries to the whole of South America."—(*Viscount Turnour*).

IRISH FISHING-BOAT BUILDING.

Return ordered, "showing (1) the number of Fishing Boats built for, and of new Fishing Boats purchased by the Congested Districts Board, the description, tonnage, price, where built, and the dates of their construction to be given; (2) similar information as to the Fishing Boats for the building of which loans have been made to fishermen by the Inspectors of Fisheries (as far as they can supply the information) and by the Department of Agriculture."—(*Sir Thomas Esmonde*).

DEATHS FROM STARVATION OR ACCELERATED BY PRIVATION (LONDON.)

Address for "Return of the number of Deaths in the Administrative County of London, in the year 1905, upon which a Coroner's Jury has returned a verdict of Death from Starvation, or Death Accelerated by Privation, together with any Observations furnished to the Local Government Board by Boards of Guardians with reference to cases included in the Return (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 285, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Talbot*).

UNTENANTED LANDS (IRELAND.)

Return ordered, "of Untenanted Lands in rural districts, distinguishing demesnes on which there is a mansion, showing: (1) rural district and electoral division; (2) townland; (3) area in statute acres; (4) valuation (Poor Law); (5) names of occupiers as in valuation lists."—(*Mr. Ginnell*).

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (UNITED KINGDOM, COLONIES, AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES.)

Address for "Return showing:—A. The total Military Expenditure, during the last financial year, of (1) the United Kingdom; (2) India; (3) the self-governing Colonies; (4) other Colonies and Dependencies; (5) the chief Foreign countries; B. The Military Establishments maintained at the cost of the Imperial Exchequer in the various Colonies and Dependencies, and the approximate cost in each case."—(*Mr. Lehmann*).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Board of Agriculture Leaflets—and Tuberculosis.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has given instructions for the withdrawal of that portion of the leaflet recently issued by the Department of Agriculture suggesting that tuberculous cattle should be fattened for sale as food; whether it is intended that proceedings should be taken against those responsible for the issue of the said leaflet similar to the prosecutions levelled against traders in native meat who purchase bona fide at full price in open market subject to veterinary inspection, animals which are subsequently condemned and confiscated as being tuberculous; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to remedy this inequality of treatment.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I beg to refer to my reply to the hon. Member's previous Question of the 12th instant.† The Department of Agriculture are arranging for the issue without delay of a revised leaflet, and the passage to which exception has been taken will be so worded as to leave no room for doubt as to its meaning. I have already indicated that the passage in question was not intended to bear the interpretation which the hon. Member places upon it. The cattle referred to are not properly described as tuberculous. The Answer to the second inquiry is in the negative. In reference to the final inquiry, I beg to refer to the reply given by my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board to the hon. Member's Question of the 20th February.‡

Kinvara Mail Service.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that complaints have been made for a considerable length of time past regarding the deficient mail service to Kinvara, county Galway; and whether he will take steps to ascertain at once if it is possible to establish a mid-day service.

(*Answered by Sydney Buxton.*) I find that the cost of the existing service to Kinvara is at present very high as compared with the amount of the correspondence, and I am sorry that I cannot therefore establish a mid-day service as well.

Promotions in Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, without exception, on the various occasions on which vacancies in the rank of acting postmaster have hitherto arisen on the staff of the Belfast office, a notice was duly posted in both the sorting office and telegraph departments, intimating the existence of the vacancy and inviting applications from the respective staffs; and if any exception exists in respect of this practice within the last ten or fifteen years, will he specify the date of such exception; if not, will he state the particular circumstances under which this practice was departed from on a recent occasion; and will he state what safeguards have been or will be introduced to protect the interests of members of long service under the present system.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 907-8.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clii., 211.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It was formerly the practice to invite applications for the duty of taking charge of vacant offices, but this is not always now done. The claims and qualifications of the eligible officers are carefully considered whether they make application or not, and the claims of officers of long service are thus safeguarded.

Correspondence relating to Treasury Grant to Cork Junction Railway.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will furnish a copy of the correspondence which passed between the right hon. Member for South Dublin, the Treasury, and Lord Barrymore, during the session of 1905, with reference to the making of a grant by the Treasury in aid of the proposals contained in the Cork Junction Railways Bill of last Session.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I can find no trace in the Treasury records of such a correspondence.

Irish Land Purchase.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the entire amount, including principal and interest, paid in a term running its full normal course by a purchaser of a rent of £100 under The Land Law (Ireland) Act 1896, at seventeen and three quarters years' purchase, and under the Land Act of 1903 at seventeen and three quarters, twenty-two, and twenty-five years' purchase, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Land Commission that, under The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, in the case of a rent of £100 at seventeen and three-quarters years purchase, a purchaser, in paying the advance, pays during a term of forty-two and a half years in principal and interest the sum of £3,017 10s. Under the Land Act of 1903 the amount payable during a term of sixty-eight and a half years is as follows—A rent of £100 at seventeen and three-quarter years, £3,951 15s. 3d.; a rent of £100 at twenty-two years, £4,897 15s. 0d.; a rent of £100 at twenty-five years, £5,563 18s. 3d. It is, however, to be observed that the land purchase annuities before and since the Act of 1903 are at the rate of four and three and a quarter per cent. respectively. The rate of interest included in each annuity is the same, viz., two and three-quarters per cent., but the sinking fund included in annuities created prior to the Act of 1903 is £1 5s., as compared with 10s. in annuities under that Act. At the different rates of purchase mentioned in the Question the annuities would be as follows—

Number of Years' Purchase. (Rent, £100.)	Before the Act of 1903, at 4 per cent. (Term, 42½ years.)	Under the Act of 1903, at 3¼ per cent. (Term, 68½ years.)
	£	£ s. d.
17¾	71	57 13 10
22	88	71 10 0
25	100	81 5 0

Taking the purchase money at seventeen and three-quarters years' purchase on a rent of £100, the advance both before and since the Act of 1903 is the same, viz., £1,775. That the entire amount payable, including principal and interest, is more under the Act of 1903 than before, is due to the fact that the principal is left longer outstanding.

Portuguese Railway Loan.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information which may be made public, regarding the issue of a Portuguese railway loan; and, if so, whether such loan is intended in part for the construction of railways connecting Nyassaland and Portuguese Zambesia with the coast.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Grey.*) The Portuguese Government have published a prospectus announcing the issue of a loan for 3,371,310 milreis in bonds of the nominal value of ninety milreis, bearing interest at 4½ per cent. guaranteed by the revenue from the State railways. Although the fact is not mentioned in the prospectus, this issue appears to be part of an authorised loan of 7,000,000 milreis to be applied to the development and improvement of Portuguese railways. We have no information that any portion of this loan is intended for the construction of the railways mentioned.

Labour Recruiting in British Central Africa.

MR. REES: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that it has proved necessary to cease recruiting from British Central Africa for the Transvaal mines owing to excessive mortality among the emigrants, and in view of the fact that British Central African labour is wanted for British Central Africa, the Colonial Office will consider the advisability of revoking the permission granted to recruit in the Protectorate.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The question of recruiting from British Central Africa has for some time received careful consideration, and the Secretary of State has decided that, unless the mortality returns for the year ending the 30th June next show a marked improvement, recruiting from the Protectorate must cease.

Mortality of White Labourers in Transvaal Gold Mines.

MR. HILLS (Durham): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the importance of the subject, he will take immediate steps to ascertain the mortality per thousand of white labourers working in the Transvaal gold mines, as distinguished from the mortality among the white population generally.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I regret that my previous Answer to the hon. Member on this point was not quite accurate. The Secretary of State has not the figures of mortality among white miners in the Transvaal for the whole of 1905, but the figures for the quarter ended 30th September, 1905, are given as 23·657 per thousand (see p. 45 of Cd. 2819). For the two previous quarters they were 19·407 and 19·711.

Anthrax at Messrs. Campbell and Harrison's Works, Bradford.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the Report of an inquest held at Bradford on the 19th instant, to inquire into the deaths of two operative wool-workers who died from general anthrax, where the jury declared that not sufficient care had been taken; and whether he is aware that several deaths from the same cause have taken place within a recent period at Messrs. Campbell & Harrisons, one of the firms concerned; whether, having regard to the seriousness of the situation, he will furnish the House with a list of the cases of anthrax which have been contracted at the firm referred to; and can he state the source from which the wool is derived upon which these operatives have been employed and the price paid by the importers for the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Yes, I have had before me Reports on the two cases mentioned in the Question. In regard to one of these the jury expressed the opinion that sufficient care had not been taken to extract the dust from the wool, but in the other case they considered that every possible precaution seemed to have been taken for the protection of the workpeople. It is the fact that during the last two years a number of cases of anthrax have occurred at this firm's works, sixteen in all, of which eight proved fatal; and I shall be happy to furnish the hon. Member with a list of them if he desires to have it. In the majority of the cases the wool used was of Persian origin, but, as the firm do not purchase wool but comb it on commission for other firms, it has not been possible to ascertain the price paid. I may add that, in compliance with the new regulations, a number of structural improvements have been carried out by the firm, as well as several suggestions on points outside the regulations which have been made by the inspector, and a doctor has been engaged at the company's expense to visit and treat any person in their employ who reports illness from any cause. Special attention will continue to be given to these works, especially in connection with the process of sorting.

Closing of Licensed Refreshment Houses at Nottingham.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can explain why licensed refreshment houses in the city of Nottingham are allowed to be kept open till midnight; and, if there is no legal authority for the practice, can he take steps to ensure that the law regulating the hours of closing such houses is duly observed in that city.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I am informed that the refreshment houses to which the Question is understood to relate are not licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors, and though they are required by an Act of 1864 to close at the same hour as premises so licensed, viz., 11 p.m., it has not been thought expedient in Nottingham to enforce this strictly. The opportunity of obtaining food or refreshments in them till midnight has been found convenient and quite compatible with public order. I am not charged with the administration of the Act of 1864. The Watch Committee of Nottingham are the police authority of that city, and any complaints about this matter may properly be addressed to them.

Mine Accidents—Special Rescue Corps.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will inquire whether the Westphalian Mining Corps, which rendered aid at the Courriéres disaster, consisted of miners, or of persons not themselves miners, but specially trained as a life-saving corps for service in mining accidents; and if he will consider the propriety and the means of providing a special rescue corps for each large group or district of coal mines in Great Britain.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) As I stated in reply to Questions on the subject last week, the question of the provision of facilities for rescue work in case of accidents in mines is to be referred to the Royal Commission on Mining, who will no doubt make full inquiry into the system adopted in Westphalia.

Hours of Closing of British Museum Reading-Room.

MR. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury on what grounds was the hour of closing the reading-room of the British Museum changed in the autumn of 1904 from 8 p.m. to 7 p.m. and what result has the change had on the attendance in the evening after 6 p.m.; and whether with a view to render this national institution available for other than professional students, he will consider the advisability of keeping the museum open later.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Trustees state that, whilst the reading-room is largely attended during the earlier hours of the day, very few readers made use of it between 7 and 8 o'clock. On the other hand the cost of keeping the room open till 8 o'clock and of continuing the working of the electric light, is considerable, and, in view of the scanty attendance after 7 o'clock, does not seem to the Trustees or to the Treasury to be any longer justified.

Incomes Exceeding £2,000 per Annum

MR. GROVE (Northamptonshire, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state how many incomes in Great Britain and Ireland exceed £2,000 per annum; and, if he has not such information, whether the Treasury will take steps to supply the information required.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I have not this information, nor have I the means of obtaining it.

Postal Deliveries at Moneyvroe, County Waterford.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will recommend a daily postal delivery to Moneyvroe, near Cappoquin, county Waterford.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have called for a Report on this subject and on its receipt I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Testing of Post Office Weights and Scales.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the weights and scales for letters and parcels in the post offices are tested from time to time by duly qualified inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Post office weights and scales are not liable to inspection under the Weights and Measures Acts; but they are tested from time to time by officers of the department.

Repairs of Irish Schools.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any complaints have reached him from Catholic school managers in Ireland as to the demands of school inspectors for the repairs of existing schools, including the erection of lavatories in localities where the same could not possibly be erected; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action on these complaints.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I do not remember having received any complaints of the nature referred to. The Commissioners of National Education have furnished me with a copy of a circular letter which they sent to managers of schools in 1903, calling attention to serious defects in school houses and school premises, including those indicated by the hon. Member. The question of the sanitary arrangements of national schools is one for the Commissioners to deal with.

Appointment of Female Pupil-Teachers to Boys' Schools in Ireland.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on and after the 1st July, 1906, it is proposed to appoint female pupil-teachers in boys' schools in Ireland, with a view to the increase of the mixed schools in Ireland; and, if so, whether, in view of the objections, on moral grounds, of Catholic managers to this change, it is intended to persist in this proposal.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Commissioners of National Education do not propose to appoint female pupil-teachers in boys' schools after the 1st July, 1906. Junior assistant mistresses may, in accordance with a recent regulation, be appointed after the 1st July, 1906, in boys' schools in which the average attentance ranges from thirty-five to fifty. The Commissioners are not aware of any objection to this regulation.

Applications for issue of School Requisites in Ireland.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in 1905, the Education Board for Ireland notified the local school managers that they had a surplus of school requisites on hand which they were willing to give away; that the right Reverend Monsignor O'Farrell, P.P., V.G., Ardagh, thereupon applied for some for the five Catholic schools in his parish, the pupils on the rolls in which number 396; and that, whilst the one Protestant school in the parish with fifteen pupils on its rolls got their share of these articles, not one of the Catholic schools got theirs; and what explanation there is of this action.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that applications for the issue of school requisites are dealt with in the order in which they are received. The fact that the application from the school mentioned in the last part of the Question was dealt with before the applications from the other schools referred to, was due simply to priority of application. All the applications referred to have now been dealt with.

Sale of the Thompson (Clonfin) Estate.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state whether any reply has yet been received by the Estates Commissioners to their representations to the Scottish Provident Insurance Company, as mortgagees in possession of the Thompson (Clonfin) Estate, North Longford, with a view to its sale to the Commissioners for stripping, and also for providing homes for the evicted tenants of County Longford.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners are pursuing their inquiries into this matter. They have not yet received a reply to the communication they have addressed to the owners.

Use of Transport Car for Conveyance of County Inspector.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the county inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary stationed at Londonderry is given the allowance for a horse and servant; and, if so, why is a mounted man of the Royal Irish Constabulary and transport car employed daily to convey him from his private residence to his office at Victoria Barracks, a distance of nearly three miles; and whether he will arrange that this mounted man shall be employed otherwise in the public service.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The county inspector's official correspondence is necessarily conveyed each morning to his residence, 1¾ miles from his office, by mounted orderly or by transport car. In the latter case the county inspector usually takes advantage of the opportunity afforded by the return of the car to drive to his office when his duties do not call him elsewhere. This arrangement meets with the approval of the Inspector-General. It is necessary that the horses should be exercised, and when the car is not engaged upon other public business there is no reason why it should not be used in the manner indicated.

Addition of Rent to Purchase Price under the Land Act.

Captain CRAIG (Down, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in order to facilitate sales under the Land Act of 1903, it is permissible to add the current year's rent or any part of it to the purchase price, although the bonus may not be paid on such current rent or part thereof; and, if so, will such rent, on allocation, in case of a settled estate be paid to the tenant for life.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The purchase price to be paid is a matter for agreement between vendor and purchaser. Under Section 48, Sub-sections (1) and (2), of the Act of 1903, the bonus is to be calculated on the amount of the purchase money advanced under the Land Purchase Acts. The Answer to the last part of the Question is contained in Section 24 (8) of the Act.

Pay and Duties of Colonels of Foot Guards.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War what are the duties in peace and on mobilisation of the colonels of regiments of Foot Guards, as regards the regular service, and what is the estimated value of their annual pay and allowances.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The duties in peace and on mobilisation of the colonels of regiments of Foot Guards, as regards the regular service, are to act as officer commanding the regiment and regimental district and officer in charge of the records of the regiment, in which capacity he is responsible for the recruiting of the regiment and for calling up the reservists of the regiment on mobilisation. The estimated value of his pay and allowance is about £760 a year.

Report of Outbreak of Epizootic Lymphangitis at Waterford.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will furnish to the hon. Members for Waterford City and for East and West Waterford a copy of the Reports made by officers of the Army Veterinary Department in reference to the outbreak of epizootic lymphangitis at Waterford.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Such Reports as are forwarded by officers of the Army Veterinary Department are confidential, and it would not appear expedient to make any exception in the present instance.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Hired Accountant Clerks in the Admiralty.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the duties on which it is proposed to employ the hired accountant clerks, as set out on page 151, Vote 12 of the Navy Estimates for 1906–7, are in any respects temporary, and, if so, in what respects; what number of the hired accountant clerks will be employed on such temporary duties, and what number on duties that are not considered temporary; and whether he can give an approximate date when the state of the work will admit of the services of temporary men being dispensed with.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The system of employing hired accountant clerks in the Accountant-General's Department has been in force for a year. The total number at present authorised is 151. The duties on which these clerks are employed are permanent.

H.M.S. "Britannia"—Beagling Grant.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that beagling is provided for the cadets of H.M.S. "Britannia" out of public funds; and whether he will make it a condition of continuing the grant out of which this form of sport is maintained that beagling be discontinued and a drag hunt subsituted.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The question of the maintenance of the pack was considered last year, and the matter was left to the discretion of the college authorities. But it was decided that the cost of the pack, if retained, should be a charge upon the sports fund, and that the expense should be strictly limited and should not be made a reason for increasing the subscription of the parents, out of which the sports fund is maintained, beyond the sum already allowed. Until, however, the college attains its full strength in May, 1907, it was decided that the cost of the kennel-man should be charged to Navy Votes.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said the right hon. Gentleman had missed the point of the Question. What he wished to know was whether, having regard to the cruelty involved in this form of sport, which was obnoxious to large numbers of people, the grant would be withheld until a drag hunt was substituted.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON suggested that if the hon. Member wished to raise this point he should put a separate Question on the Paper.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said the Question which he drew up covered the point, but it had been sub-edited out of all recognition.

Obsolete War Vessels.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to offer for sale by public auction at an early date a number of obsolete ships; and, if so, whether, in view of the recent decision of the Admiralty to discharge 600 men from those dockyards, and in view of the poverty existing in the neighbourhood, he will abandon such sale and order that such ships be broken up by the employes of such dockyards whom the Admiralty have decided to discharge.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The course suggested by the hon. Member is impracticable, as it would result in serious congestion in the docks and basins which are intended for construction and repair work, and not for the breaking up of obsolete vessels. Even if space were available, the work could not be economically undertaken in the absence of the requisite shipbreaking plant and specially trained workmen.

MR. JENKINS: Has it ever been attempted? Was the result unsuccessful financially?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON promised to inquire.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of insisting that these vessels are broken up in this country instead of being taken abroad?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I will inquire as to what the present rule is.

Wei-Hai-Wei.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, with the disbandment of the Chinese regiment at Wei-Hai-Wei, any troops whatever will be left there; and whether he can see his way to make any further use for the expenditure of £53,000 incurred at Wei-Hai-Wei on permanent works under Military Works Loan Acts since 1897.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): No troops will be left at Wei-Hai-Wei. I am not in a position to give any reply to the latter part of the Question at the present time.

St. Helena.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to withdraw the whole of the troops at present stationed in the island of St. Helena, to dismount the guns, and leave the island entirely unprotected; or whether it is intended to revert to the plan of quartering there a battalion or half-battalion of the West India Regiment, together with detachments of Royal Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps, and Royal Army Medical Corps.

MR. HALDANE: It is intended to withdraw the whole of the garrison, but arrangements will be made for the despatch of a garrison in case of war. The question of the disposal of the guns is under consideration. There is no intention of sending any of the West India Regiment there.

West Indian Islands Garrisons.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, since the announcement by his predecessor of the withdrawal of the garrisons from certain West Indian islands, it has been decided to leave in any of such stations detachments of Garrison Artillery or other military corps; and, if so, whether he will explain the object which such detachments are intended to serve.

MR. HALDANE: It has been decided to leave in Jamaica the necessary force of Royal Garrison Artillery and Royal Engineers for the imperial fortress of Kingston, Jamaica.

Epizootic Lymphangitis at Waterford.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the cases of epizootic lymphangitis first appeared among the Army horses in the Waterford barracks; can he state how many cases occurred in the barracks before February 7th, 1905, when the first case among civilian horses was reported; were horses that had been stabled at the barracks allowed out to grass, and were these horses subsequently destroyed as being affected with the disease; and whether, seeing that the Chief Secretary on July 5th, 1905,† said that the disease appeared to have been introduced through the medium of Army horses, he will order a public inquiry to be held at Waterford into the matter, and give the Waterford County Council, as representing the ratepayers, an opportunity of being represented at the inquiry and offering evidence.

MR. HALDANE: This disease first appeared among Army horses in Waterford barracks in October, 1903. Up to February 7th, 1905, seventeen cases occurred, twelve being troop horses and five officers' private horses. No case has occurred since at Waterford. No troop horses were sent to grass, but among some officers' horses which were run at grass at Williamstown was one which had been stabled at the barracks; the disease appeared among these horses while at grass, and they were destroyed. The Chief Secretary stated on June 29th last that he did not consider a formal investigation of this matter necessary, and in this view I concur.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlviii., 1135.

MR. POWER: Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman says that the War Office is not responsible, and yet Lord Onslow on July 11th last † said the disease has been almost wholly imported into Ireland by Army horses, and that Lord Spencer had stated that a distinguished officer had warned the War Office against bringing back any horses, will he grant full compensation to the owners of horses slaughtered?

MR HALDANE: I cannot accept the responsibility. We have looked into the matter and I have announced the conclusion we have arrived at.

MR. POWER: On the first possible occasion I will draw attention to this matter.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Is this one of the blessings of the war?

Royal Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the negotiations for the sale of the Royal Sparkbrook Small Arms Factory to a private company commenced; and whether the Government has promised this company 25 per cent. of the orders that are given out to private contractors.

MR. HALDANE: The negotiations commenced in November, 1905. Twenty-five per cent. of the orders that are given out to private contractors were promised to the company for the three financial years ending March 31st, 1909.

Colonial Contribution to Imperial Defence.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the amount of the contributions from the Colonies to the upkeep of the Imperial Forces, Army and Navy, for the last completed financial year, and the amount chargeable for the same purpose to the people of the United Kingdom; and whether he can state the total revenue for the same year of the British Colonies and the United Kingdom respectively.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The total of the annual contributions of the Colonies for the latest Colonial financial years for which returns are available is £876,665. I am informed that the expenditure in 1904–5 from Army and Navy Votes was £65,793,006, and that the total Exchequer Receipts of Revenue were £143,370,405. The total revenue of the British Colonies cannot be stated exactly for the same year, owing to the different dates of commencement of the financial year in the various Governments, but I would refer the hon. Member to page 15 of the Colonial Statistical Abstract for 1905, which shows that, excluding Protectorates and including Australian State revenues, the total for 1904 was approximately £85,713,284. These revenues are, however, not strictly comparable with Exchequer receipts, as they frequently include revenues analogous to those of local bodies in this country.

Transvaal Mining Shares.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of persons holding bearer shares in the Transvaal gold mines.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir, I am not able to state the number.

Orange River Census.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when the recent Census of the Orange River Colony will be published.

*MR. CHURCHILL: I would refer the hon. Member to the summary of the Census published in July, 1904, at pages 14–19 of Cd. 2103, as well as to pages 169–175 of Cd. 2660. I have not learnt whether it is proposed to publish a further and more detailed statement.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxlix., 227.

St. Helena Garrison.

*MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received from the Governor of the island of St. Helena any representations either in favour of, or in objection to, the proposed withdrawal of British troops from that island.

*MR. CHURCHILL: No; except that the Governor has telegraphed that grave concern is being caused throughout the colony by repeated newspaper statements that all the troops are to be withdrawn.

*MR. HICKS BEACH: Will the substance of the telegram be communicated to the War Office?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I am not aware whether the Secretary for War has been communicated with; but, of course, the whole question has been carefully considered both by the War Office and the Colonial Office, and also by the Committee of National Defence.

*MR. HICKS BEACH: But the Secretary of State for War has just informed me that all the troops are to be withdrawn, and under the circumstances, ought not this expression of opinion to be put before him?

*MR. CHURCHILL: I believe the anxiety is caused by the rumours that the troops are to be immediately withdrawn, which would dislocate the actual economic position in the colony. But, as a fact, some interval will elapse, during which other arrangements can be made both for the purposes of defence and in the interest of the islanders.

Land Taxation in India.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): I beg tó ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in 1879, when the revenue derived in India from the taxation of land was (roundly) £13,5000,000 annually, Sir W. W. Hunter, K.C.S.I., the Director-General of Statistics, declared in the Legislative Council of the Viceroy, of which he was a member, that the Government assessment did not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year; and whether, seeing that the land tax has since increased, by £5,000,000 a year, to £18,500,000, he will sanction the further increase of £735,500 proposed in the Budget Estimates for 1906-7, just issued by the Government of India.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) asked, before the Secretary of State answered, whether the Secretary of State was aware that many other members of the Viceroy's Council had expressed opinions wholly different from that of the individual member on the assumption of the correctness of whose opinion the Question was based.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I have no doubt that the Secretary of State is aware of the fact referred to in the second Question. In 1879 Sir William Hunter was not a member of the Legislative Council. In 1882 he was a member, and made a speech, in which he quoted a passage from a report by a Judge in the Deccan Districts, to the effect that in average years the Deccan ryot does not gain enough from his land to pay the assessment and to support himself and his family. Sir William Hunter was referring solely to the assessments in the Deccan, where the circumstances, I am advised, were exceptional. The apparent increase of £735,000, as between the revised Estimate for this current year and the Estimate for 1906–7, is mainly to be accounted for by the fact that remissions and postponements to the extent of £440,000 have been granted during the current year. I do not propose to with hold my sanction from the Budget proposals of the Government of India.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked whether, although the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned the fact that a certain state of poverty existed at that time in a certain limited area of the Indian Empire, is it not the fact that more recently famine had been general all over the Indian Empire.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS: I must take exception to the expression "all over"; but, undoubtedly, speaking generally, the answer to the hon. Member's Question must be in the affirmative.

Tibet.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India when further Papers on the agreement with Tibet will be laid upon the Table.

Mr. ELLIS: There would be some inconvenience in presenting Papers just now, but I hope further information will be laid upon the Table at no distant date.

The Open Door in the Congo Basin.

Mr. J. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the General Act of the Conference of Berlin provides that all nations shall enjoy a complete liberty of commerce in the territories situate in the Congo Basin, the limits of the territories being accurately set out in the said Act, and that the Treaty or Act has been broken by the ruler of the Congo Free State, His Majesty's Government will either take the necessary steps to bring the whole transaction under the review of the Hague Tribunal or take into consideration the advisability of denouncing the Treaty under which the Free State came into existence.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): Before deciding upon any action in the direction indicated by the hon. Member, His Majesty's Government must wait and see in what manner the question of freedom of trade will be dealt with in the instructions shortly to be issued by the Congo Government on the recommendation of the reforms committee which has recently concluded its labours at Brussels. One of the signatory powers is, however, not competent to denounce an international agreement.

Congo—British Merchants' Claims.

Mr. J. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the friendly relations now existing between the English and French Governments and the people of both countries, and the fact that over two years ago the French Government agreed to submit the claims of British merchants, who had been ruined by French and Belgium concessionnaires, to arbitration, he will state what has been done to terminate the state of affairs now existing; and whether he concurs in the doctrine laid down by French and Belgium concessionnaires, that the products of the forest did not constitute trade, and that British merchants could only trade in what the native produced in art or industrial work not based on natural forest production.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The question of these claims continues to receive the earnest attention of His Majesty's Government, but no definite statement can be made at the present stage of the negotiations. The answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

Factory Regulations—Precautions against Fire.

Mr. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he endorses the opinion of His Majesty's inspector of factories for Camborne, Cornwall, expressed when giving evidence at an inquest on March 5th, namely, that it would be unreasonable to expect that, where only two people were employed, the owner should be compelled to place a staircase outside; and, failing agreement with this decision, whether he will secure a full explanation from the said inspector.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I am not sure what were the exact words used by the Inspector, but I do not think it would be safe to conclude from the report published in the *Western Morning News* that he did make this statement. If he did, then I do not agree with it. It is difficult to fix an exact standard of safety in these cases. But my own view is that it is the duty of every occupier of a house who is responsible for the safety of its inmates to make proper provision for egress in case of fire; and that where there is but a single staircase, it is especially necessary to provide an alternative way of escape

Waste Lands and Afforestation.

MR. C. NICHOLSON (Yorkshire, W. R., Doncaster): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now say definitely whether the proposed Royal Commission on coast erosion and kindred subjects will deal with the questions of waste lands and afforestation.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): No, Sir; it is not proposed that the reference to the Royal Commission on coast erosion shall extend to the question of afforestation or to the question of waste lands except in so far as they are sloblands.

Unemployed and the Distress Committees.

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the North East Division of Manchester I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state to the House the number of persons who have applied to distress committees for work, and the number for whom work has been found; and whether it is intended to introduce a Bill which will enlarge the powers of distress committees so as to enable them to adequately perform their duties

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): According to the latest figures, which were published in the *Labour Gazette* of the Board of Trade for March, the total number of persons who between the opening of the registers and the end of February had made application to the Distress Committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act was 106,312. The number of cases investigated was 79,705, and out of 75,145 of these 12,729 were found to be ineligible or not suitable for assistance under the Act. The number of persons receiving employment under the Act in February appears to have been 24,903. I cannot at present state the total number of persons who have had assistance under the Act, but I propose in due course to obtain complete figures on the subject so far as England and Wales are concerned. The Government have intimated their intention of bringing in a Bill for the amendment of the Act.

Manchester Unemployed.

MR. THORNE: On behalf of the hon. Member for the N.E. Division of Manchester I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a number of unemployed workmen were recently engaged through the Manchester Corporation Distress Committee, as sandwichmen, at 1s. 6d. per day, being 6d. less than the usual rate; and whether he will recommend these committees to maintain an established rate of pay.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have communicated with the Clerk to the Manchester Distress Committee and am informed that the men referred to had their names down on the Labour Register and that they were engaged by an advertising agent from a large number of men who were assembled in the Police Yard. I am also informed that the terms of payment were a matter of arrangement between the men and the employers, and that the Distress Committee had nothing to do with the fixing of the rate of payment or the selection of the men engaged.

Hayes Sewage Disposal Inquiry.

*MR. J. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the Reports, of the 27th July and the 3rd August last, of the inquiry at Hayes by two of the Board's inspectors in reference to a loan to meet excess expenditure on works of sewerage and sewage disposal, and to the proceedings of the engineers to the scheme, as disclosed in those Reports; and whether he will say what action he intends to take in the matter.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have seen the reports in the Sanitary Record of the dates mentioned relative to the inquiry at Hayes, and I understand that it is to these reports that the Question refers. After the inquiry I caused a letter to be sent to the Urban District Council as to various matters arising out of it.

*MR. J. WARD: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to laying on the Table Papers connected with this business?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Not in the least.

Shop Assistants and the Living-in System.

Mr. SEDDON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he intends to seek powers by legislation, or otherwise, to apply the conditions of inspection for model lodging houses to premises where shop assistants are compelled to sleep in under the living-in system.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: I presume that my hon. friend desires that the provisions enabling by-laws to be made for the inspection of houses let in lodgings or occupied by members of more than one family should be expressly made applicable to premises of the kind to which he refers. I will take note of his suggestion, so that it may be considered when a suitable opportunity presents itself for legislation on the subject. I could not undertake to deal with the matter this session.

National Telephone Company, and the Hull Municipal Telephones.

Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the recent offer of the National Telephone Company for the purchase of the municipal telephones of Hull; and whether, seeing that the offer was higher than the offer made by the Post Office for the same property, and that the assets of the National Telephone Company are purchasable in full by the State a few years hence, he will, in the public interest, take steps to secure that this company shall not offer, in competition against the State, sums which the State itself is pledged to reimburse.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have not made any definite offer to the Corporation of Hull for the purchase of their telephone system. On two occasions representatives of the Corporation Telephone Committee and of the Corporation have discussed the question of purchase; first, with my predecessor, and again with myself. We were given to understand on both occasions that the Corporation were not prepared to entertain an offer of less than the repayment of the full capital expended. This is a price which makes no allowance for depreciation, and is considerably higher than the valuation made by my engineers. In the interests of the taxpayer, I do not feel justified in offering it. The Corporation have not further approached me on the subject. I understand that the National Telephone Company have made an offer to purchase the Corporation telephone system; but the price to be paid by the Telephone Company (supposing their offer be accepted) will not in any way affect the price to be paid by the State in 1911 for the plant which the Postmaster-General is under agreement to purchase at that date. That price will, under the agreement, be the then value of the plant, etc., which is purchased, having regard to its suitability for the purpose of the Postmaster-General's telephonic service.

Mr. BELLOC asked whether he was to understand that these great efforts on the part of the National Telephone Company to buy up plant were being made out of philanthropy, or had they reference to the obligation of the Government to reimburse them in 1911.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he imagined the company expected to make a profit between now and 1911. The Government would pay only the then value of the plant, having regard to its suitability for the purposes of the Postmaster-General.

Mr. BELLOC: If I am a Member of the House I will remember it on that occasion.

Swiss Parcel Post Rates.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General have the postal authorities of Switzerland expressed themselves willing to discuss the lowering of parcel postal rates, and an increase in the weight of ordinary postal letters passing between the United Kingdom and Switzerland; and will he instruct the British delegates attending the forthcoming Universal Postal Congress in Rome, favourably to view and help forward concessions so beneficial to the interests of both countries.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Swiss Post Office has proposed a reduction of the rates of postage on parcels passing between this country and Switzerland; but it has not hitherto been practicable to meet its wishes. The Anglo-Swiss parcel post is carried on under a special agreement which will not be discussed at the Rome Congress. Certain proposals for reducing the letter rate will be discussed at the Congress, and the British Delegates will give all these matters their attention.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR was understood to ask if it were permissible for the British Government to come to an arrangement with the Swiss Government.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON replied that under the Postal Union there were agreements between the various countries concerned, but it had not been found possible to accept the Swiss Government offer for reasons which he would communicate to the hon. Member privately.

Bersham (Denbigh) Postal Arrangement.

Mr. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the application made by the Parish Council of Bersham, in the county of Denbigh, with regard to the system of delivering letters in their area; whether he is aware that while there is a second delivery of letters in a portion only of the said parish, namely, in part of High Street, Heol Maelor, and in the sparsely-populated district of Vrondeg, which comprises a few farmhouses only, the densely populated districts of the Smelt, Talwyn, Adwyrclawdd, and the Nant, with a population of over 5,000, have been refused a second delivery; and whether he will take steps to give effect to the wishes of the parish council and the inhabitants of this parish, by allowing the second delivery of letters to cover the same area as the morning delivery.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The applications referred to have been sent to the district surveyor, and on receipt of his report I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Importation of Store Cattle into the United Kingdom.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can say whether the restrictions at present in force in regard to the importation of store cattle into the British Isles are to be withdrawn; and, if so, will he explain on what grounds this decision has been taken.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): The restrictions to which the hon. Member refers cannot be withdrawn without further legislation on the subject. The decision of the Government with respect to it will be stated when the Bill now before the House comes forward for Second Reading.

Pupil Teacher's Ring—Holyhead Case.

*Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that a young lady teacher in the Holyhead Intermediate School, Miss Peggy Williams, daughter of the Rev. John Williams, was ordered to remove a ring from her finger, which she wears with her father's consent, and that, having refused to comply, she was suspended by the head teacher; and whether, in view of this case and the one at Rotherham recently, he will issue instructions to the principal teachers in all schools receiving Government or rate aid, prohibiting the use of such powers over female teachers by their superiors.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): I have seen a newspaper report of the case at Holyhead referred to. I may point out that girls in both these cases were pupils and not teachers in the schools. I quite agree with the hon. Member that the treatment of these girls appears to have been of an arbitrary and most unwise character. At the same time sumptuary laws of this kind are very common, especially in girls' schools, and are, so I am informed, attended with very satisfactory results. I do not think that the central authority in Whitehall should interfere with the discretion of the governors or managers of the schools in laying down rules of discipline unless such rules have led to a loss of efficiency in the school.

*Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman see that Miss Turner is not prevented going on as a teacher, seeing that her engagement has been broken? Is hers not a grievance which it is within his duty to deal with?

MR. BIRRELL: I deal with that case in answer to the next Question.

The Rotherham Education Committee and Miss Turner.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will inquire of the Rotherham Local Education Committee if they resolved on February 7th to dismiss Miss Daisy Turner for having refused to remove her engagement ring at the bidding of her mistress, Miss Hodge, and that, on discovering that their action was illegal, they, on February 21st, decided on the alternative course of cancelling her engagement as a pupil teacher, and offered her £5; and, if so, whether he regards the explanation offered to him in the recent explanations of the council correct and satisfactory; and whether he has conveyed to the council his disapproval of their treatment of Miss Turner.

MR. BIRRELL: The regulations of the Board require that all pupil teachers should be engaged under a proper agreement, but I have no power to prevent a local authority from terminating any agreement under conditions specified in the agreement itself. I do not think, therefore, that I can properly interfere in this case, but I quite agree with the hon. Member that the action of the local authority appears to have been arbitrary and most unwise.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg further to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of the fact that the Rotherham Council of Education terminated the engagement of Miss Turner as a pupil teacher, without her consent, and six months before the completion of her indenture, for no other fault, actual or alleged, than having refused to remove her engagement ring, Miss Turner is now prevented from pursuing the profession of a teacher, her apprenticeship not being completed; whether the Pupil Teachers' Centre in Rotherham is supported, in whole or in part, by State funds; and, if so, whether he will interfere to prevent Miss Turner being deprived of her engagement, actual and prospective, or secure that she shall be adequately compensated for the loss of her means of living.

MR. BIRRELL: It will still be open for Miss Turner to follow the profession of an elementary teacher, if she passes one of the examinations which will qualify her for recognition as a teacher under the Code. The Pupil Teachers' Centre at Rotherham is in receipt of grants from the Imperial Exchequer. As I have already stated, I have no power to interfere to prevent the cancelling of Miss Turner's agreement, or to obtain for her further compensation, beyond the maximum compensation provided for in that agreement. The only ultimate power possessed by the Board of Education over the local authority in cases of this sort would be the extreme measure of withdrawing the Grants in respect of the Centre on the ground that the action complained of had rendered the Pupil Teachers' Centre educationally inefficient.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is not accountable for the efficiency of the teachers who receive payment from the State, and on that ground is he not entitled to intervene in the matter, and to see that this lady is not interfered with until she gets through her examination?

MR. BIRRELL: I am afraid I cannot go so far as that. I may say that the teaching staff is efficient, and I can only trust that they give efficient teaching to the pupils.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: The right hon. Gentleman did not say if he was aware that this lady was dismissed, although the authorities at Rotherham denied that they had dismissed her.

MR. BIRRELL: It is undoubtedly the fact that the agreement was terminated by payment of a £5 note, which was one of the conditions for determining the engagement, and therefore her connection with the Centre has terminated, but she can continue her education as a teacher in the way I have referred to in the Answer.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is it not the fact that the Rotherham authority first dismissed her, and then, finding that their action was illegal, took the other method of dismissing her?

MR. BIRRELL: I believe that is so.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On that point, then, they stated what was absolutely untrue when they said they did not dismiss the girl. Will the right hon. Gentleman take notice of that fact?

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. Member seems to think I possess much greater control than I have actually over local authorities. This House is in favour of local popular control, but I am afraid that my powers of interference with local authorities, even when they act arbitrarily and irregularly, are very limited.

*MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I hope the Rotherham authority will be ashamed of themselves, as everybody who acts like this ought to be.

Teachers and Vaccination.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has received an application from the Education Committee of Leicester, asking that the teachers may be excused from being vaccinated against their will; and whether, in view of the fact that vaccination is no longer compulsory by law, he will allow persons with a conscientious objection to vaccination to be accepted as teachers.

MR. BIRRELL: I have received the application mentioned in the Question. It has always been the practice of the Board to require that all persons proposing to be engaged as teachers should be vaccinated. I understand that in certain districts local authorities find it difficult to obtain teachers owing to the fact that a considerable part of the population has not been vaccinated. As it is the local authority and not the Board which engages the teacher, it is a matter for consideration whether it might not be possible to throw upon local authorities the onus of consenting or refusing to employ unvaccinated teachers. But the question is one of so much importance that I am not yet prepared to make any definite statement.

MR. J. R. MACDONALD: I will repeat the Question in a few days.

New Government Offices in Whitehall.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it has been decided to cease completing the towers on the new Government Offices in Whitehall; and, if so, whether, in view of the number of masons who would be thrown out of employment and the amount of stone that has been dressed and carved, he will consider the advisability of completing the original design

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire Rossendale): After consultation with the architects and the Advisory Committee, I have decided not to carry the towers on the Charles Street side of the new public offices to the full height, as originally designed. This decision was arrived at on two grounds; first, that owing to the narrowness of Charles Street there is hardly any point of view from which they would have been visible; and, second, if carried out as designed they would have obstructed so much of the light available for the India and Local Government Board Offices on the opposite side of the street as to render some of their already limited accommodation practically useless. With regard to the tower on the Great George Street side, no decision has been taken as to its ultimate completion, but it will not be carried up to its full height at present, as it must be some years before the remainder of the building towards St. James's Park can be completed or even commenced, and until this is done the erection of only one of a pair of high towers would be architecturally and structurally undesirable. Considerations of economy have not entered into the question.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: Is it not the fact that there has been no work on these buildings for some weeks?

MR. HARCOURT: No, Sir. There has been no stoppage of work except on the towers.

MR. THORNE: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has communicated with the contractors with a view to getting the men who were employed on the towers employment on some other part of the building?

MR. HARCOURT was understood to reply in the affirmative.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): May I ask what is the estimated economy which the mutilation of the original design of these buildings will produce?

Mr. HARCOURT: I did not consider the question of economy at all.

Temporary Clerical Assistants for the Admiralty.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury under what Order in Council, or other authority, the grant of over £13,000 has been made to the Accountant-General of the Navy for temporary clerical assistants; what were the circumstances advanced to move the Treasury to approve of this arrangement; what safeguards, if any, have been introduced to ensure that the persons employed are properly qualified and adequately paid, and that the money is being spent on its legitimate purpose; and also, whether he will consider the advisableness of withdrawing the covering sanction of the Treasury, and restoring the clerical staff arrangements of the Department of the Accountant-General of the Navy to open competition in accordance with the Order in Council of June 4th, 1870, Clause II.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): As was explained to my hon. friend on the 8th instant,† no new principle is involved in extending to the Department of the Accountant-General of the Navy the system which has been for some years in operation in the Supply Departments of the Admiralty, whereby hired (non-pensionable) assistants are engaged to perform subordinate clerical duties. The scheme, which is based on the principle of retaining in the service only those who prove efficient, is understood to be working well in practice and to provide adequate remuneration for these hired accountant clerks. The legitimate expenditure of this money is secured by the audit of the Comptroller and Auditor-General. I see no reason to go back on the arrangement.

National Galleries—Custodian's Emoluments.

Colonel HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will explain why a difference exists in the emoluments of custodians employed in the several National Galleries of Art (Trafalgar Square, Kensington, and the Tate Gallery); and whether, having regard to the identity of the conditions of appointment and of responsibility, he will consider the desirability of making the rates of emolument identical.

Mr. McKENNA: I assume that my hon. and gallant friend refers to the attendants in the galleries. It is true that the conditions of appointment of these officers are the same, but their duties vary considerably in responsibility. The salaries in each case have been fixed with regard to the importance of the services entrusted to the staff, and I do not think uniformity of rates would be desirable.

The Turco-Egyptian Frontier.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there was any truth in the report appearing in the morning papers of the previous day to the effect that failing agreement between the Egyptian and Turkish Government, in regard to the occupation of Akaba the position would be bombarded by a British war ship; and whether the Egyptian Government had ever exercised any authority in Akaba.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I should like to take the opportunity of my hon. friend's Question to dispel some of the apprehension which has been aroused by mis-statements in some quarters. No ultimatum has been sent to the Turkish Government, and no question has been raised as to Akaba, which is in Turkish territory. Tabah, on the contrary, is in the Sinai Peninsula, which for several generations has been recognised as being under the administration of Egypt; Tabah and one or two other posts in the Sinai Peninsula have quite recently been occupied by Turkish troops; it is obvious that this aggression upon Egyptian administration cannot be allowed to continue, but this question is now the subject of negotiation.

Glasgow Parish Council Nurses.

Mr. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the Glasgow Parish Council have approved of new regulations for nurses in their employ, whereby the said nurses have had their average weekly hours of labour increased to seventy-one, and their maximum salaries reduced to £35; and seeing that the Exchequer gives maintenance grants towards these nurses' up-keep, does the Government intend to sanction the new regulations.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 601-2.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The facts are as stated, but the Government has no power to interfere either with the regulations, or with the present distribution of the grant. The regulations will not come into force for some weeks, and a petition has now been presented to the Council by the nurses asking that they may have each alternate Sunday off duty, which I am informed will meet their wishes.

Education of the Blind in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the Report of the late Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the condition of the blind in the United Kingdom, and the recent Report of the International Conference held in Edinburgh last year, he proposes to grant State-aid for the education of the blind in Ireland; and, if so, when.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): His Majesty's Government are considering the question of reintroducing the Irish Education (Afflicted Children) Bill of last session, under which it was proposed to give state aid towards the education of blind, deaf, and other afflicted children.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Will adults be included in the scheme?

MR. BRYCE: I cannot answer that without notice.

Irish Land Purchase Statistics.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the entire amount, including principal and interest, paid in a term running its full normal course by a purchaser of a rent of £100 under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, at seventeen and three-quarters years purchase and under the Land Act of 1903 at seventeen and three-quarters, twenty-two, and twenty-five years purchase, respectively.

MR. BRYCE: The Answer to this Question contains tabular statements which would be rendered more intelligible by a printed reply, and, with the hon. Member's permission, I will have my answer circulated with to-night's Votes.†

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to the fact that, while under the Land Purchase Acts of 1885, 1881, 1891, and 1896, when the price averaged seventeen and three-quarters years purchase of the rents, the Land Commission refused to sanction the prices which the tenant had agreed to pay in 7,838 cases, on the ground, generally, that those prices were excessive and the security insufficient, there have been only 693 refusals on similar grounds under the Act of 1903, though the prices with the bonuses average more than twenty-five years purchase of the rent, being an increase of seven and a quarter years purchase; and can he refer to any statistics showing that these higher prices are not excessive and that the advances are sufficiently secured.

MR. BRYCE: It seems to be the fact that during the five years preceding the Act of 1903, the price of land sold under the Land Purchase Acts averaged seventeen and three-quarters years purchase, while under the Act of 1903 it has averaged 22·7 years purchase, or an increase of five years purchase. There are no statistics showing that the later prices are excessive, and obviously no conclusion on this point could be formed without a knowledge of the comparative value of the property sold. Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that owing to the lower rate of annuity under the new Act the people have found it to their advantage, in free bargains, to pay the price they have given. Nothing has transpired to show that the amounts so advanced are not secured.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that an annuity for sixty-eight and a half years is the same as one for forty-two or forty-nine years?

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† See column 1045.

MR. BRYCE: I cannot answer that without entering into an argument.

Letterkenny Guardians and Canadian Cattle.

MR. CHARLES McVEIGH (Donegal, E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a Resolution passed by the Letterkenny Board of Guardians, county Donegal, protesting against the threatened importation of Canadian store cattle; and, if so, will he say what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. BRYCE: I have received the Resolution referred to. I have already stated that the interests of Ireland in this matter will be duly considered. The existing statutory prohibition of the importation of store cattle cannot be removed without legislation.

Chancery Leases.

MR. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether tenants whose landlord was a minor in Chancery in 1881, and who was obliged to sign a seven years Chancery lease, have been excluded from the benefits of the rent-fixing Acts, and, if so, does he propose to provide any relief for such tenants from the burden of excessive rents.

MR. BRYCE: The facts are as stated in the Question. Lettings in matters relating to minors have always been held to be excluded from the rent-fixing clauses of the Land Acts. If legislation to amend the Irish Land Acts should be found necessary, the claims of these tenants will be considered by the Government.

In reply to a further question Mr. Bryce said the decisions of the country had been uniform on this subject.

Lord Clanricarde's Agent and the United Irish League.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to a letter sent by Mr. Tener, J.P., agent to the Marquis of Clanricarde, to Mr. Martin Ward, of Loughrea in which he assigns as the reason for the legal proceedings instituted against Mr. Ward for the recovery of his house and premises, that he was a member of the United Irish League; is he aware that a decree for possession was granted during the course of the week; and what steps the Government propose to take in order to safeguard the rights of men such as Mr. Ward.

MR. BRYCE: I have now seen a copy of the letter referred to, and have been informed that a decree for possession was recently granted. Whatever opinion may be entertained as to the propriety of such action as was taken in this case, the Government have no power to interfere, and could only obtain such power by legislation.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Then we are to understand that Lord Clanricarde's agent did assign this as a reason for evicting Mr. Ward?

MR. BRYCE: The letter has been published, and I think that is the construction to be put on it.

Irish Butter Industry.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say on what basis the estimate was made of the amount of £5,250,000 worth of butter produced in Ireland in 1905; whether he can say how the amount of £3,250,000, stated as the export figure of 1904, was arrived at; and is he now aware that the amount in both cases is much larger than the figures quoted above.

MR. BRYCE: The estimate made by the Department of Agriculture of the total production of butter in Ireland in 1905 was made on the basis of the number of milch cows, exclusive of heifers in calf, and the estimated supply of milk available for butter-making. The estimate of the value of butter exported in 1904 was based on the returns of imports and exports obtained from the several port and harbour authorities and from shipping companies. It did not include butter sent by parcel post or carried as ships' stores, as there were no reliable means of estimating these quantities. The

Department have no information to show that their estimates in these two cases were insufficient, but they would welcome a detailed statement from those who have arrived at higher estimates, showing how these estimates have been arrived at.

Inspection of Irish Creameries.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that a number of creameries in Ireland are registered by the Department and subject to regular inspection; and, if so, is there anything to prevent the Department registering other makers and exporters of butter who are satisfied to have their premises registered and inspected at any moment by an official of the Department.

MR. BRYCE: Under the scheme of the Department of Agriculture for encouraging improvement in the management of creameries, a great many creameries are regularly inspected and a register of those in which the prescribed conditions are observed is published annually. There is nothing to prevent the owners of private dairies from taking advantage of the scheme, but several of the conditions are not such as would suit the business of a butter exporter.

Scully Estate, Kilkenny.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what is the result of the negotiations for sale to the Estates Commissioners of the Scully estate, Tullaroan, county Kilkenny, which were entered into in 1904.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they made an offer for the purchase of this estate, but the owner declined to accept it.

Evicted Tenants in Kilkenny.

MR. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what was the number of evicted tenants entitled to reinstatement under the Act of 1903 in county Kilkenny at the date of the passing of the Act; and how many of those have been restored to their own or equivalent holdings.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners have received 153 applications from persons seeking reinstatement as evicted tenants in county Kilkenny. They have not yet had time to ascertain the nature of the claims of all of these persons, but will make enquiries as soon as may be possible. Three evicted tenants have been reinstated in this county to the knowledge of the Commissioners.

Beet Cultivation in Ireland.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that beetroot can be profitably grown in Ireland, even on land of inferior quality, and that on analysis it has been found that Irish-grown beetroot is superior to that grown in Germany; and whether the Department of Agriculture will take any steps to encourage the growth of that crop in Ireland.

MR. BRYCE: In the opinion of the Department of Agriculture, the average analysis of sugar beet grown on small plots in Ireland has shown that beet of good quality can be grown in the country, but there is no evidence to indicate that this crop, if grown widely, would yield a profitable return, when the comparatively high cost of cultivation and of the necessary plant is taken into consideration. The Department do not feel that they would at present be justified in recommending the growing of beet as a general crop.

Cloonkeen Teacher's Salary.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan, N.T., Cloonkeen, Leap, was suspended in 1904; and whether, seeing that there was an epidemic of measles in the district when the inspector made his report of the school, and that although the Rev. M. Cunningham, P.P., manager of the school, requested a re-examination he was refused, and that after a service of twenty-nine years this teacher's salary was withdrawn and a pension refused, steps will be taken to fully investigate the circumstances of the case with a view of reinstating O'Callaghan in his former position.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that on the 10th May, 1904, Mr. O'Callaghan was removed from the principalship of Clonkeen boys' school. In that year, and for a series of years previously, the reports on his work were of an extremely unfavourable character, and he had been repeatedly censured and once fined. In July, 1904, the manager made a request for a re-examination of the school, but the application was not entertained. Mr. O'Callaghan was in any case ineligible for a pension by reason of insufficient age. The Commissioners inform me that they do not propose to re-investigate the case.

Faked Hams in Ireland.

Mr. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the cases of faking hams in Ireland; and, if so, will he say what action, if any, has been taken in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: The attention of the Department of Agriculture has been drawn to a letter published in a newspaper on February 28th, which contained an allegation that the writer knew that American bacon and hams had been imported into Ireland, branded with an Irish brand, and sold as Irish produce. An inspector of the Department at once visited the writer, but failed to obtain from him any evidence in support of his statement.

Mr. JOYCE: He did not want to get it.

Merchant's Quay, Kilrush.

Mr. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will make inquiries as to what steps, if any, have been taken in the lighting and safeguarding of Merchant's Quay, Kilrush, county Clare, where several lives have been lost; if the inspectors who visited the place in or about December, 1905, and who have sent copies of the docks and quays regulations under the Factory Acts to Mr. Vandelure, pointing out his responsibility under them, have furnished him with their Report; and whether he will make inquiries why this danger to the lives of the inhabitants of Kilrush and to the sailors and others who have business to transact there is not abated and the quay properly protected.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg to answer this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. The quay in question is a small one used by only one firm. The statement in the Question that several lives have been lost there is new to me. An inquiry was made and a report received from the factory inspector in November last. This did not disclose any very serious irregularities, but the occupier was served with the dock regulations, and his attention drawn to his responsibilities under them, and to the necessity of lighting and fencing when vessels are loading or unloading. I have called for a further report upon the place.

Mr. HALPIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this property belongs to the Grand Jury of county Clare?

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I was not aware of it.

Cork Junction Railways Bill.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will furnish a copy of the correspondence which passed between the right hon. Member for South Dublin, the Treasury, and Lord Barrymore, during the session of 1905, with reference to the making of a grant by the Treasury in aid of the proposals contained in the Cork Junction Railways Bill of last session.

Mr. McKENNA: I can find no trace in the Treasury records of such a correspondence.

Ministers and Company Directorships.

*Mr. BRIGHT (Oldham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the rule as to the resignation of directorships, on acceptance of office, was made in order to prevent Ministers from occupying their time on matters other than their official duties; and, if so, why private businesses are made an exception; and whether this rule tends to exclude men of commercial experience from all Liberal Governments of the greatest commercial country of the world.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): No, Sir, I think my hon. friend's fears are exaggerated. I know of no such tendency. All men of commercial experience are not directors of public companies. There is an obvious difference between a partner in an ordinary private business and a director in a public company.

The South Africa Committee.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (West Birmingham): I believe that on Thursday it is proposed to take the Army Estimates. Since that was arranged something has occurred which we on this side of the House consider of great importance, the appointment of a Committee to visit South Africa in reference to an inquiry into the Constitution. In these circumstances, and considering that the matter is very urgent, as the Committee is immediately starting, I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will put down the Colonial Vote for Thursday,

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I do not think we can interfere with the arrangements for this week, as they have been announced.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether the Committee proceeding to the Transvaal will be instructed to have in view in their inquiries and report the paramount necessity of maintaining British interests in the new colonies and preserving them as an integral part of the British Empire.

SIR H CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; no such instructions will be given. The necessity which the hon. Gentleman describes affects the action of the Imperial Government, and they have no desire or intention of transferring their responsibilities in that matter to any Committee. The inquiry by the Committee sent to South Africa relates only to the facts upon which their decision will rest.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: In view of the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and of the great anxiety which was felt by a great many Members and a great many people in this country, and also of the imminent departure of the Committee to South Africa, and of the difficulty made by the First Lord of the Treasury in setting apart a day for the discussion of this question, I have to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the omission from the directions to the Committee which is about to proceed to South Africa to inquire and report into matters connected with the constitution of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies of any instruction to the Committee in any inquiry they may make and in any report they may submit to have in view the paramount necessity of maintaining British interests in the Transvaal and in the Orange River Colony and of preserving these new colonies as integal parts of the Empire.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member can hardly bring that question within the rules of urgency. The matter is a very important one, but the Committee, I understand, is leaving this week or the week after, and it must take a month to get out to South Africa. During that time there will be opportunity of telegraphing out instructions which would meet the Committee on its arrival. During the month or six weeks there will be opportunity for the hon. Member to raise the question either in Committee of Supply or upon the Motion of Adjournment for the holidays; therefore I do not think the rule was drawn to cover a case of this kind. The rule was drawn to cover a case where no other opportunity offered for raising an important question.

NEW BILLS.

CROWN LANDS BILL.

"To amend the Crown Lands Act, 1829 to 1894," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 124.]

DEAN FOREST BILL.

"To authorise the exchange of parcels of waste in the Forest of Dean, and to amend the Dean Forest (Mines) Act, 1904," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 125.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TRANSFER OF TREASURY POWERS) BILL.

"To transfer to the Local Government Board the Powers of the Treasury under enactments relating to Local Authorities," presented by Mr. McKenna; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 126.]

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To regulate and control Sunday Trading in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Gulland, Mr. McCallum, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 127.]

TEXTILE WORKERS (SATURDAY AND SUNDAY HOLIDAYS) BILL.

"To prohibit employment between noon on Saturday and six o'clock on Monday morning in woollen, worsted, and silk factories," presented by Mr. Jowett; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 128.]

EDUCATION OF DEFECTIVE CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Education and Conveyance to school of Epileptic and Crippled and Defective Children in Scotland," presented by Mr. Gulland; supported by Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Barnes and Mr. Watt; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 129.]

SHOP CLUBS ACT (1902) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To extend the provisions of Section 1 of the Shop Clubs Act, 1902, to membership of Trades Unions and Industrial and Provident Societies," presented by Mr. John Ward; supported by Mr. Steadman, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Brace, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Fenwick and Mr. Bell; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 130.]

PRIVILEGES.

Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Blake, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Ellis, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, and Mr. John Wilson (Durham) were nominated members of the Committee of Privileges.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS, ETC.

Ordered, That Mr. W. F. D. Smith be discharged from the Select Committee on Official Publications, etc.

Ordered, That Mr. Bowles be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

SUNDAY TRADING.

Motion made, and Question proposed, That Mr. Haviland-Burke be a Member of the Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords on Sunday Trading.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) wished to substitute the name of a Labour Member for that of Mr. Haviland-Burke on the ground that the working-classes should be amply represented at an inquiry into a subject in which they were so closely interested.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) pointed out that Mr. Haviland-Burke should be on the Committee as representing the Irish Nationalist Party, and failed to understand why he was objected to.

MR. J. MACDONALD withdrew his objection.

***MR. KEIR HARDIE** (Merthyr Tydfil) moved to omit the name of Mr. Gulland and substitute a Member of the Labour Party. He had, he said, no objection to the hon. Gentleman personally, but this was a matter which practically affected the convenience of the working-classes and the smaller shopkeepers, and therefore the Labour Party ought to be more strongly represented on that.

Amendment proposed—

"That the name of Mr. Gulland be omitted."—(*Mr. Keir Hardie.*)

MR. WHITELEY said the Committees had been set up with great care, and he did not think the hon. Member could suggest that trades unionism was not represented. Mr. Enoch Edwards represented the largest trades union in the United Kingdom, and was chairman of the trade unionists on the Government side of the House. He did not think any complaint could be made in regard to the selection, and he was sorry he could not substitute another name for Mr. Gulland's.

Amendment put and negatived, and Motion agreed to.

Sir Henry Kimber and Mr. Stuart Samuel nominated other Members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered That two be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. GUEST (Cardiff) said the Bill had two objects; one was to apply to foreign ships the same provisions with regard to sailors as were applicable to our own ships, and the other was, from the national point of view, to do something to encourage British seamen. He did not think that anybody could deny that the application of the load-line to foreign ships was needed in the interests of the safety and welfare of the sea-faring population, and it could hardly be contended that those foreign ships which used our ports should be exempted from this provision which had redounded so very much to the credit of the gentlemen who first secured its application. The possession of a certain amount of knowledge in the English language was equally important in the same direction. He did not think hon. Members opposite would be able to charge his right hon. friend with any protective instincts or protective ideas in the Bill which he had introduced. Of course, it might be suggested that they had, in fact, a slightly protective effect, but that was not the object which his right hon. friend had in making those provisions. Seeing that they were justifiable and that he did not think any Member of the House was of opinion that they were undesirable, it would not be for them to accuse him of introducing protective legislation for British seamen. But there was a much more important object, from a national point of view, than the introduction of safety measures, and that was the encouragement of British seamen. Everybody who knew anything about shipping or who had the good fortune or the misfortune to represent a seafaring port, knew perfectly well that one of the greatest deterrents to the adoption of a seafaring career was the fact that, if a British seaman engaged under present conditions on an English ship, he was very apt to find himself in the position of being in a foreign country. Very often it happened that every other seaman on the ship was a foreigner, and there was small inducement to British seamen to serve. Another great grievance which British seamen had had to endure in the past was the scale of food to which they had been subjected. Many people had assured him that one of the most important considerations, if they wished to have a British crew and if the British crew was to be satisfied and to be satisfactory, was that there should be a good cook and a good scale of provisions. Most of the best shipowners appreciated that fact, and steps had of late years been taken very much to improve the conditions of living on board British ships. That provision in the Bill, therefore, would have the effect largely of levelling up shipowners to the standard of the best shipowners in the country. The better provision for the repatriation of distressed seamen left abroad must also have a similar effect upon encouraging British seamen. That object, as he had said, was a national object. It was surely of the very greatest importance in these days, when we relied so much upon the Blue-water school, that there should be in this country at any given time a large available supply of seamen to whom we could look in time of war to fill up the gaps in our Navy. It would be a very disastrous thing if, owing to oversight or indifference, British seamanship were allowed to diminish, until, perhaps, British shipping had passed almost entirely into the hands of foreign seamen. This Bill, therefore, had his support on national grounds as well as on the grounds of safety. He knew there were Members in the House, and especially the hon. Gentleman the Member for Middlesbrough, who thought that the provisions of the Bill, with regard to foreign seamen, should be extended in part, if not in bulk, to the exclusion of lascars. He imagined that that hon. Member thought lascars were as much foreigners as Greeks, Norwegians, or Spaniards, but he would tell the House an experience which he had during the recent electoral contest. It went a long way to prove that, in the opinion of the public, lascars were British subjects and were so regarded. At one of those usual dockyard crowds which it was the lot of a candidate to address at election times, he was approached by an Englishman, who complained bitterly of the foreign competition which prevented him from earning a livelihood. The man was pale and hungry, and he would have made an impression upon anybody thus interviewed by him. Whilst he was urging his case and asking him (Mr. Guest), if returned to Parliament, to do something for him and others like him, a negro came up and proceeded to protest in voluble, but not very good English that he was suffering from similar competition. Thereupon he (Mr. Guest) said, "You are protesting against the competition of foreigners. Here is a foreigner, and he is protesting against similar competition." "Oh, no," said the crowd, "he is a British subject; we do not object to him." In that protest his pinched and starving friend was one of the first to join. It was, therefore, absolutely clear to his mind that in our ports Englishmen did feel that British subjects stood upon a different basis to foreigners, and whose competition was entirely foreign competition. In view of that fact, he hoped the President of the Board of Trade would resist any attempt to exclude lascars or any other British subjects in the way he had excluded foreigners by the clauses of the Bill.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): May I correct the hon. Member? I do not object to the employment of lascars, and never have objected. All I say is that they should not be used for the purpose of driving Britishers out of British ships.

MR. GUEST said he understood that the hon. Gentleman wished to limit their sphere of competition in some way or another. Here was a negro. He did not know where he came from, but he was recognised by a Party crowd to be a British subject, and he came there in distinct competition with the man who was complaining very bitterly and suffering so much from all forms of foreign competition. Although the man was extremely bitter and hostile about the foreign competition to which he was subjected, he did not in the least object to the competition of the negro, because he was a British subject. He did not believe that English seamen in the least objected to the competition of British seamen whether they come from England or were natives of self-governing or Crown Colonies. What they did object to was the competition of foreign seamen. He did not think his right hon. friend was concerned with the question of competition; he was concerned with the question of safety; and he did not doubt that the negro was quite capable of understanding words of command given in the English language. He believed this measure would meet with the approval of the shipping community in general, and that it would not inflict any unnecessary burden upon the shipping industry. He did not believe it would do more than in some cases level up the practice of the less public-spirited shipowners to the level of the more public-spirited shipowners. In his opinion it would not have a hampering effect upon trade, and it would provide a much-needed improvement in shipping Acts as applicable to seamen.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.) asked for the indulgence of the House, as a new

Member, to say a word or two upon the question of alien pilots in British waters. He expressed his gratitude to the President of the Board of Trade for his sympathetic attitude towards this question in his speech last week. Up to the present time only eighty-five certificates had been granted to foreign pilots. That might not seem to be so very serious, but he maintained that, if something was not done, the certificates would increase, and the matter in time would become very serious indeed. The profession of a pilot was one of great responsibility and should be remunerated accordingly. If the number of certificates was increased by certificates being granted to foreign masters and mates, then, while the responsibility remained, the profitableness of the profession would be diminished. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, which authorised piloting authorities to grant certificates to masters or mates of any ship of any nationality, caused a great injustice and was a great danger to the State. A pilot's living was gained by navigating ships through the intricate courses which had to be followed when approaching or leaving this Island Kingdom of ours. He would quote an instance. The approach to the City of Bristol, a Division of which he had the honour to represent, required considerable skill in navigation, and the native pilots there considered it a great hardship that the masters of foreign ships should be allowed to pilot their vessels up the river. In nearly all other maritime countries the necessary local knowledge was limited to a body of native pilots, and, in fact, he believed in some cases pilots' certificates were not granted even to native captains. Our system of compulsory pilotage was modified by a provision being made to grant certificates to masters and mates of ships which habitually traded through the particular port authorising them to pilot their own ships. He believed at first the local authorities considered that this regulation was supposed only to apply to Britishers, but the Board of Trade thought differently and held that no exclusion of foreigners was implied. In this way foreigners had obtained equal rights, and not only could they pilot their own ships in our waters, but, by so doing, they saved pilotage dues. The consequence was that the native pilot saw foreign ships pass by navigated by men who had not one-half the local knowledge he possessed, and he felt at the same time that he was being deprived of what he might fairly consider to be his rights. Apart from all this, the House should look at the inducement for foreign mercantile officers to get British pilotage certificates. The possession of such certificates increased their chance of promotion in the naval reserve force of their own country very considerably, and in that way it seemed to him we were training a body of men who would strengthen the intelligence department of foreign countries, and, without doubt, constitute a very grave danger in time of war.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he had listened with very great pleasure to the speech of the hon. Member for Cardiff, who had expressed similar views to those put before the House by one or two hon. Members of the Labour Party on the Second Reading of the Bill. There was no town in his constituency on the coast, and he would not be justified in troubling the House with any observations were it not that he thought that no man was worth much who did not speak up for his friends, on whatever side of the House he sat. He should like to say a word or two on behalf of the lascars, and in reference to the petition which was read in the House. When the petition was read, some doubt was expressed as to whether it was written by a lascar. A question was actually asked on the subject. It was likely enough that it was not written by a lascar. He believed it was not written by one, but it expressed, in the most exact manner, the feelings of the lascars. He would explain how these things were done. In the East it was not the custom to do things for one's self which it was somebody else's business to do. In this country a man might shave himself without offence, but in the East if a man were to shave himself he would be regarded as interfering with the rights of the barbers. In the same way it was not the custom to write petitions: it was a profession to write petitions. A petition writer would be sitting in the street and no sooner did he see a lascar coming round than he proceeded to get the petition written, and it was almost done before the lascar told him what he wanted. The petition might commence, "There is in the British Parliament a good kind gentleman called Havelock Wilson, who is the father and mother of sailors and lascars." That would be the conventional form, but it did not exactly meet the case. The fact was that the lascar wanted to complain of this hon. Member because he proposed to give him more cubic space than he needed. He did not want it. It was in his opinion a noxious draught. The fact was that the lascar did not want the benevolence of this Gentleman, who was described as the father and mother of the British sailor. That was a correct description of the case, and for that reason he was extremely pleased to hear what the right hon. Member for Carnarvon said of the lascars, when he testified to their competence as sailors. There might be difficulty in dealing with them in view of the competition of Eastern and Western labour, but he wished to testify to the fact that these men were deserving of all consideration. He did mean to say that to press such provisions in regard to the lascars was in point of fact utterly unreasonable. It was a well-known fact that if a native of India owned a palace, he would sleep in a corner. He disliked space and absolutely enjoyed crowding. These facts might not be acceptable in the House, and they might not be understood. But they were precisely what the lascars thought. There were a great many people on the continent of Europe who were absolutely unwilling to have an open window during many months in the year. The regulations which applied to British seamen were wholly unsuitable to lascars, and if the question arose it should be dealt with on a proper footing without applying regulations suitable for Europeans to people of a different colour who did not want them. It had been suggested in the course of the debate that the lascar's ignorance of English might give rise to danger. The fact was that the lascar, like all his race, was a born linguist. He himself had never seen a lascar who did not perfectly well understand the words of command, and he was convinced that no difficulty or danger would arise with these men on that account. No objection of that kind could really hold water. If the employment of the lascar competed with that of the British sailor he deeply deplored it. He had lived in India, and he would put the British sailor first, but at the same time he believed it was a fact that there was plenty of room and plenty of work for both. The lascar was a very honourable counterpart in the East of the British sailor in the West. He hoped the House would excuse him for making a few remarks on this branch of the subject with which he was really acquainted.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said that in the Bill as it stood there were some omissions which might be rectified by the Grand Committee. There was no mention made in it of any alteration in the space allowed to seamen. He was a member of a Select Committee two years ago which threw out a Bill of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and they made a special report at that time, stating that it was desirable that the Board of Trade should deal with the question of crew space. At present, under the Act of 1854, the space allotted to each seaman was only 72 cubic feet. That provision had been acknowledged by the President of the Board of Trade to be too small. He was well aware that that was exceeded by nearly all the vessels now trading, but the fact was used in debate and was also made use of outside the House by the Seamen's and Firemen's Association, and by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. It was not so much a question of crew space for seamen as a question of the measurement of ships. Mr. Gerald Balfour referred the matter to a Departmental Committee in February, 1905, and he wished to ask whether that Committee had yet reported. It was most desirable that Members should have that report before them before the Bill was considered by the Grand Committee. This was a matter of great importance, not only to shipping interests, but especially to dock interests. It was only on Monday that the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board passed a Docks Bill through a Committee of the House of Lords entitling them to spend £4,500,000 on the extension of docks at Liverpool. That money was to be spent chiefly for the berthing of the new large Cunard steamers. Those steamers were of immense size and the accommodation they required was very great, but it was contended by the Mersey harbour authorities that under the measurements at present existing and under the system by which dues are levied at the docks on the net registered tonnage those great ships would probably pay only at the rate of 33 per cent. of their gross tonnage. A Committee which had inquired into that tonnage recommended that each ship should pay on not less than 50 per cent. of the gross tonnage. He hoped the President of the Board of Trade was not averse to that subject coming before the Grand Committee and to some Amendment being inserted in the Bill by which a more equitable arrangement should be made for the reckoning of the tonnage. Mr. Byles, Sir William White, and some of the best naval authorities held that the payment of dock charges should be made for services rendered and not on the earning power of the vessel. In the 1854 Act those rates were supposed to be paid on the earning capacity of the ship. As ships were now constructed that was very unfair to the dock authorities and the great majority of ships paid on 64 per cent.. But some ships like the new Cunarders paid on between 30 and 40 per cent. although their real carrying capacity amounted to over 50 per cent. It was contended by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough that any alteration in the measurement of ships for dock dues, if charged on the gross tonnage and not on the net tonnage, would interfere with crew space, but that was not borne out by the expert evidence given before the Departmental Committee. The crew space at the present time was greatly in excess of that laid down by the Merchant Shipping Act. The President of the Board of Trade ought to bring in a new clause extending the amount of space allotted for seamen to at least double the present amount of 72 feet. He believed that no ship at Liverpool gave less than 141 feet. It ought not to be left to the caprice and convenience of shipowners, but should be laid down by Parliament. If the shipowner gave extra space to the crew it was at the expense of the dock authority, and, therefore, it was highly important that the exact amount should be stated.

*MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs) said that it would save the time of the House if he read the following Question which he recently addressed to the President of the Board of Trade and the Answer—

> "'To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps, by legislation or otherwise, so that merchant seamen shall have the right to claim that a portion of their wages, while they are away on voyage, shall be paid to persons dependent upon them for support, to banks, or trade unions, or similar institutions, as they may appoint.'
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> "MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: A seaman can already (under Section 141 (2) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894) allot half of his wages to a near relative or to a savings bank. I will consider whether it is desirable to extend the provision of this section to trades unions, or similar institutions as the seaman may appoint."

The reason for his rising and putting this Question was that he represented a large seaport town, and he had received a petition, signed by 123 seamen, saying that they frequently were unable to get an allotment of their wages which, according to the right hon. Gentleman, the law allowed them to obtain. He had a letter from the chaplain of the Seamen's Institute of Newport, saying that he had been to consult the shipping officers in order to be able to make the matter quite plain. These were the facts. The Act said—

> "A seaman may require that a stipulation be inserted in his agreement for allotment of his wages."

The seaman went to a shipping office. He was told what wages were offered, and that he might have half a month's advanced, and if he wished to make an allotment he was allowed to do so. Many shipping offices, however, refused, and said he could not claim to have any allotment. If that were so it was a very serious grievance. The ship-masters knew that they could find other men and told the sailor he was not wanted, and some foreigner, or unmarried man, or thriftless fellow, was taken on instead. What was required was an additional clause granting the request for an allotment which any sailor might make. The chaplain went on to give a concrete case of a woman of twenty years of age, married to a Norwegian. He sailed in a ship, and before doing so got half a month's wages in advance or two pounds. He tried to get more but could not. Some weeks afterwards, the husband not having returned, the wife went to the shipping office and asked for an allotment, which was refused. A letter was written to the owners in Glasgow asking them to pay the wife part of her husband's wages. The reply was a refusal, and the wife had to go to the relieving officer of her parish. It was just possible that an ordinary seaman might be confused by the intricacies of legal phraseology; he might not be able to comprehend the meaning of an Act of Parliament. He had himself read the Act of Parliament and had had considerable difficulty in knowing whether a seaman could compel a shipowner to make an allotment of his wages. Everybody knew the great temptation which confronted a sailor when he came on shore with a large sum of money—wages for perhaps a voyage of one or two years. Every possible opportunity should be given to the sailor to have some portion of the money placed in a savings bank or other secured deposit so that he might not have a large amount of money paid him on his arrival at home. The law should be so amended that it would be an offence if a form was not offered to seamen to fill in, enabling him to make an allotment of his wages not exceeding one-half of the amount. That was to say, whenever a sailor asked for a berth it should be compulsory on the part of the shipowner to allow the sailor to do what he wished with regard to the security and disposal of his wages while at sea. If that were done benefit to our seamen would be very much ensured. He trusted that the President of the Board of Trade would bring in some Amendment of the Bill in Committee in that direction.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) said that as he was Chairman, or a member, or otherwise interested in the inquiries of the several Committees whose recommendations were embodied in this Bill, he should like to say a few words about the measure. The hon. Member for Cardiff was very anxious lest we, as a nation, should make any suggestion of self-defence against unfair foreign competition in discussing the provisions of this Bill, and seemed to think we should not be justified in doing so. He entirely disagreed with the hon. Member. This Bill made very decidedly against unfair foreign competition, and he was exceedingly glad that the President of the Board of Trade was bringing it in. The right hon. Gentleman's object from that particular point of view was an excellent one. Personally, he did not see a very great deal of difference in protecting ourselves against cheap dumping by unseaworthy foreign ships and protecting ourselves against cheap dumping by a system of free imports. But, however that might be, he had every hope that as the President of the Board of Trade had undertaken to father this Bill through the House, they might yet see him a convert to defending our goods and our trade against unfair foreign competition. British trade ought to have equal opportunities, as far as possible, with foreign trade. That was the object of Tariff Reform. British ships ought to have equal opportunities with foreign ships. That was the object of the Bill under discussion; and he sincerely trusted that the direction of this policy would be followed a great deal further, not merely for our ships, but for our trade. One of the main objects of this Bill was to say that the Board of Trade regulations would be enforced against foreign ships equally with British ships. That was one of the recommendations of the Committee on Steamship Subsidies, and it was most desirable. Clause 1 of this Bill applied our load-line to foreign ships. It provided that where foreign ships were, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, unseaworthy owing to defective equipment, etc., we should be able to bring them to book. That was a very useful provision. There had been cases where it had been difficult to deal with foreign ships so as to put them on an equality with British ships. Take, for instance, the case of a foreign ship coming from

Spain loaded with iron ore to this country. If the master of that ship chose, he could load, at the Spanish port, his ship down to a level that would submerge the British load-line by the amount of bunker coal and other necessaries which would be spent on the voyage, yet so that on arrival in this country the British load-line would not be submerged.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: A British ship might do the same now; but under this Bill neither a British nor a foreign ship would be able to do so in future.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL said that what he was going on to say was that he thought the foreign ship had had an advantage, because it was not so much under the direct control of the Board of Trade as the British ship.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Under this Act it will be.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL said he hoped so, and he was not making this criticism to condemn the Bill, but only to show that a watch must be kept to prevent foreign ships from evading indispensable British regulations applied to competing British ships. He was very anxious that, as far as possible, any regulations as to load-line should strike equally at foreign and British ships. It was important that the House should be reminded that foreign ideas in regard to many matters were different from ours, and that foreigners were apt to think that we interfered unduly with their ships in making what they considered vexatious requirements. His point was that, so far as we could, we should keep to the basis of safety. He should like to know whether any effort had been made, was being made, or was likely to be made to obtain an international load-line. He thought such a course was very desirable. He knew it was not often very easy, because foreign countries were not always disposed to take action with us in regard to maritime affairs. But if an international agreement could be come to, it would be advantageous to all the seafaring nations of the world, and it would be a great triumph to this country or whatever country carried out such a scheme. He thought it might be done if we paid some attention to the views of foreign nations. There were signs at the present time that some foreign nations were disposed to think over the proposal with some favour. In Germany there had been an endeavour to establish a load-line. There was a syndicate in that country called the *Seeberufsgenossenschaft*, which was a kind of mixed trade union and marine insurance company, which had the power to make regulations somewhat similar to our Board of Trade regulations and which submitted them to the German Government for their approval. He thought that the existence of a body of that kind did show that foreign countries were awakening to the necessities of the case, and that their governments would be more ready than hitherto to negotiate for international regulations for a load-line. He understood from Clause 16 that the British regulations for passenger or emigrant ships were not to be applied to foreign passenger or emigrant ships merely calling at one British port. Those ships must be plying between British ports. That, he thought, was quite wise. It would be very undesirable on our part to impose on foreign ships, which were not plying between our ports, specific regulations of that character. He knew that we were subjected ourselves in foreign ports to exceedingly tiresome regulations, but he did not think we ought to imitate foreign nations in that respect unless it were for the purpose of getting them to comply with our regulations here. He had been told that if a British ship went into a port of Italy, and if while in that port it was painted with the British ship-owner's own paint and by his own men, the Italian Government taxed him for the painting of that ship as if it were done with Italian paint. He believed also that in Italian ports—certainly up till recently—the British shipowner was taxed for the electric light which he himself manufactured on his ship and for the use of his ship while in that port. These were merely vexatious regulations, and our regulations, he hoped, would always be child's play to such devices as those. He imagined that Clause 20, and indeed the whole of Parts 3 and

4 of the Bill were contributions of the Board of Trade to the solution of the problem of the decline of British seamen. It was a very difficult problem and he wished he was of opinion that it was easier to get British seamen to man our ships than was the fact. He did not think it was easy to get British seamen, and he wished that the naval life could be made more attractive to them. Rather than go to training ships, boys were attracted by the higher wages or the more interesting employment which they could get on land. It was exceedingly difficult to get many British seamen on our ships, and he took it that Parts 3 and 4 of the Bill constituted the remedy of the Government for that evil, although he could not say it was an heroic remedy. He could not pretend to criticise it, because it was very difficult to say that anything could be done, but he thought one ought always to be on the look-out to see what was feasible, and if any better solution of the problem than this presented itself he hoped the Government would not be slow to avail themselves of it. Sub-section 4 of Clause 20 said that the provisions were not to apply to lascars. He would like to see incorporated into that subsection the words "or other Asiatic or African crews." He would show why. There were certain cases in which ships' articles were signed for a considerable time. Suppose a ship went to the Far East and the articles expired at the end of three years, and suppose at the end of three years the ship was still out in the Far East and likely to remain there, trading from port to port. Suppose the seamen who went out with that ship said they did not wish to continue in her and were paid off. There were no means of getting any other seamen except Chinese or natives of Africa. Therefore he thought it was necessary that such provision should be made in that section that it should apply just as much to those classes as to the natives of India. Of course that was an Amendment which should come before the Standing Committee on Trade, but he pointed it out now so that it could be fully considered in time. He saw by Clause 33 that the qualification for the rating of an able seaman was reduced. At first he was a little anxious lest they might be playing a little too lightly with qualifications of that description, but he was told now that the work which was required to make an able seaman was not so arduous or difficult or complicated as it was fifty years ago and that it was quite possible for a man to be thoroughly up to his work after two years at sea. He did not think, therefore, that that was an injudicious provision. He wanted to say a word or two on Clause 40, because it was in that clause that the President of the Board of Trade proposed to appoint committees of experts, for the purpose of advising him, when considering the making or alteration of any rules, regulations or scales. That was a very useful clause, and the only remark he wanted to pass was that he should like to see that policy of Advisory Committees extended as far as possible. He was sure it was a very wise plan to bring expert knowledge and opinion directly concerned in any particular trade more familiarly before the Board of Trade than had sometimes been done. The Board of Trade had perhaps been too much apt to rely on its own initiative, and he thought the appointment of an Advisory Committee of this nature would result in making the Board of Trade more efficient. He would like to see this policy very widely extended. On one of the Committees on which he served he recollected that a recommendation was made that it would be advisable to have a small permanent Advisory Committee to watch the development of foreign competition, and that that Committee should consist of officials of the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, the Post Office, and the Colonial Office, together with representatives of shipping and commerce. He did not think anything had ever been done with regard to appointing a Committee of that kind for permanently watching foreign competition in its various aspects, but if this policy could be extended in that way also, he should certainly welcome it. With regard to the few remarks that fell from the hon. Member for West Bristol in his maiden speech, referring to the question of alien pilotage, he was in absolute accord with the hon. Gentleman, and if the President of the

Board of Trade found that legislation of that sort would not interfere with foreign treaties he would like that alteration to be made in the Committee.

MR. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.) desired to support the hon. Member for West Bristol in asking the President of the Board of Trade to exclude foreigners from piloting British vessels. He had the honour of representing a shipping constituency, and in the recess a strong deputation waited upon him for the purpose of asking him to support any legislation that was brought in on this subject. He believed that British pilots were not allowed to pilot their ships in foreign waters, and although he was a free trader he believed it was for the benefit of the mercantile marine that piloting in our waters should be done by British sailors, or naturalised British subjects. He had nothing further to say on this subject, because he thought the President of the Board of Trade, having heard so much, would do something in that direction. He hoped he would, at any rate. Before sitting down he wished to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the great Bill he had brought in.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I think we can all join in the chorus of congratulation which has fallen upon this Bill. No one can find fault with the Bill for what it contains, and if any fault is to be found it must be with regard to what it omits. Many of the observations made upon the First Reading of this measure, and some of those which have been made to-day, have been very curious and significant. The Bill is accepted by everyone, so far as its main provisions are concerned, with regard to the application of the load-line to foriegn ships. With regard to the provision that is made for the better feeding of the men, and the application of a more liberal scale of provisions, I am very glad to know that the President of the Board of Trade is in accord with the majority of the shipowners. No doubt that is a very great step in advance; but a still greater step, in my opinion, is the provision made as to the education of ships' cooks. I wish that something more had been done towards the training of boys for the mercantile marine. I do not know whether others have seen, as I have, the arrangements made for the training of boys for the mercantile marine both in France and in Germany. They are totally distinct and different systems, but both result in the supply of first-class seamen. There is one provision which is more doubtful than the others I have referred to, which I support, shall I say, with some misgiving. It is a provision which gives us something to think of. I mean the exclusion of foreigners from our mercantile marine. I am not a free importer, but I am a free trader, and I am glad to find that my interpretation of free trade is consistent with a Bill of this character. Let us see what the Bill really does. We have in the first place this proposal with regard to the load-line of which we all approve, but is the motive for that provision solely the preservation of life? If it is, we can all approve of it. But we know that it is not. We know that that is one motive, and a very great motive, but we also know from one hon. Member who said that he represented the largest shipping port in this country, the Barry Docks, and who spoke with refreshing candour, the true *raison d'etre* of this arrangement as far as he is concerned. The hon. Member said the existing system gave foreign ships an advantage which enabled them to work at a profit, whereas our ships under our rules could only work at a loss. I have no quarrel with that proposition, but its acceptance seems to carry us very far. If that proposition is accepted it carries us much further than the simple doctrine of the application of the load-line to foreign ships. If it is true and just that we should give a fair opportunity to our workers, whether they work on land or sea, by depriving them of unfair competition, then I think we have travelled a long way on a very interesting road. The hon. Members for Sunderland and for Glamorganshire were very logical on this matter. The hon. Member for Sunderland made a very candid remark. The hon. Member said—

> "If you are going to do this why do you not also insist that the wages paid on foreign ships should be the same as those paid on British ships?"

That is a little beyond my proposition at present. That is a very strong step to take. But I note it as an indication of the motive for this provision. My right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, speaking on a kindred matter, suggested that it would be reasonable, when we are making arrangements for the guaranteeing of persons working in this country against accidents and extending that arrangement to accidents to persons employed at sea, that we should insist that the provision should be extended to persons coming into our ports on foreign ships in competition with us as well as on our own ships. I see nothing in that which is inconsistent with the doctrine we have adopted with regard to the load-line. If that proposal is adopted solely on the ground of the preservation of life, I think we should have a good deal more evidence upon that point; and we should be shown conclusively that there is a great loss of life on ships coming into British ports and not conforming with our regulations. But I should like to know whether the motive, which the hon. Member for Glamorganshire says is his motive, enters into this question at all. Then, again, with regard to the question of language, we have derived a great amount of knowledge upon that subject from the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. He said we ought to exclude lascars who could not speak English, that he did not object to the employment of lascars in competition with English seamen on equal terms. But that is not my argument at all. We are now dealing with the question of whether we are to disqualify men because they cannot speak our language at all. Is that the reason why we were told the other day in this House that there were 40,000 seamen coming on to our ships between Antwerp and Cherbourg? Is that the *gravamen* of the charge that we have to meet? I think there is evidence with regard to the load-line, but I think there is no such body of evidence with regard to the language question. That there are cases I know, of my own knowledge and from other sources, but the cases are very few. There are five hundred causes of accidents at sea; there is the cause of bad seamanship, of bad discipline and of insobriety. Some of these causes you eliminate by taking foreign seamen, Finns, and Russians, who do not talk our language, but who have the qualifications of seamenship and sobriety. You must set off one of these disqualifications against the others. I am certain this question of the language is not the real test. If you are risking the lives of men on our ships by allowing foreigners to come abroad who cannot talk our language why do you not exclude lascars—although I am told that the majority of lascars do talk our language, they certainly do not all do so. Are you going to exclude those too? Is it going to be contended that the P. & O. Company's ships are more unsafe than any other ships because they have lascar crews? The hon. Member for Middlesbrough says you are going to exclude these men, not because they do not talk our language, but because they are in competition with British seamen. I did not quite agree with the hon. Member for Cardiff when he said that British seamen were very patient with foreign seamen and with non-trade union seamen. If we were in the palace of truth I should say that the British seaman does not care to work with men who are foreigners and who do not belong to his union. I do not think that the hon. Member for Cardiff was in the least justified by the actual experiences of life in what he said. That being so, what is the ground on which we are going to exclude foreigners? Is it really because they cannot talk our language, or is it because there is this growing feeling which is in many cases very strong, and which will take us to great extremes, but which in the end will give us in the British mercantile marine some real proportion of British sailors? I believe there is a strong feeling growing up in this country that it is desirable that we should have a much larger number of British seamen than we have in the mercantile marine, and I do not believe that these provisions with regard to the cubic space and with regard to the food are going to give us this restoration of the British mercantile marine. I think we have had a good lead in this matter, and I hope it will be followed. I believe we are only at the beginning. I was reading the other day a passage written by a very keen observer in the East, who said when he saw work done in the East by men working for long hours, work done with great capacity and skill, he could not help feeling that when such work came into direct competition with work done by Western people, the Eastern labour would drive out British labour as the brown rat in this country drove out the black rat. The Lord Chancellor, speaking on the same subject the other day, spoke of the competition of non-regulated foreign labour. He said—

> "If there was any attempt made to introduce it into this country all these sophistries would be swept away instantly, and in no part of Europe would cheap Chinese labour or cheap labour of any kind be allowed to compete with white labour."

And what is true of Chinese labour is true of all cheap labour. When I have that statement on so high an authority as that of the Lord Chancellor, I think there is something in this Bill. I think it is reasonable that we should take some steps to protect our workers from unfair competition. I am not a purist in these matters, and I do not think that because this Bill takes a new departure we should be so fastidious as to object to it. It is, after all, but the muttering of the storm, an indication of the way men's minds are moving. The hon. Member for Central Sheffield and the hon. Member for Thanet have both put down instructions which I hope will commend themselves to the right hon. Gentleman opposite. They refer to the question of pilotage. There are two points of view from which that question may be regarded. The question is a national one. It may be looked at from the point of view of national safety. That is a very important point indeed, but if the representative of the Admiralty were in his place I would ask him whether the Admiralty supported this provision. I say that they do not. It is not a point they press. Yet we find that every section of this House has come to one opinion on this question. They say we are at present exposed to an unfair competition. Go where you will, up and down the Channel, and you will see pilot flags flying from foreign pilot vessels and you will see foreign captains taking charge of their ships when coming up the Medway and the Thames. I say it is unjust and unfair that foreign pilots and foreign ships masters should be allowed to come into our ports in this way and that we should receive no reciprocity at all in this matter. The State demands certain very high qualifications from our own pilots. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is therefore a very necessary one, and I hope he will not abandon it. The opposition to it will not be of a serious character, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will find that there is a sentiment of gratitude felt towards him by the people whom he has benefited. I do not oppose this Bill, and merely rise for the purpose of pointing out a few points of importance in regard to it. I wish to give my full support to the measure.

*MR. CAIRNS (Newcastle-on-Tyne) craved the indulgence of the House as a new Member. He congratulated the Government most heartily upon the improved conditions which were likely to eventuate from the standard food scale adopted in the Bill. He trusted that there would not only be plenty of food of good quality, but competent cooks to serve it. There were other provisions in the Bill which worked in the direction of improving the sailor's condition; but he believed the House would confess that, important as these provisions were, the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act to seamen was the most beneficial thing that had been done for them during the last twenty years. He hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would not accept the invitation proffered to him to go into the question of tonnage measurement at the present time. That was a most intricate and far-reaching question. There were two sides to be heard on that matter, and it would require a very long and thorough investigation. It was intended to apply our load-line and our standard of life-saving appliances to foreign ships trading on the high seas which eventually arrived at British ports. That was not an entirely new departure. It had been argued that this measure was intended to avert unfair foreign competition. He had noticed that in this Parliament every measure brought before the House was most carefully scanned in certain quarters to see if there was the least grain of protection in it. In practice the effect of applying our load-line standard to foreign ships would be that such ships with deeper immersion, which previously were able to come to British ports, would gravitate to those ports where there were no such restrictions. The result would be that these foreign ships, carrying larger cargoes, would serve foreign nations and foreign commerce at a cheaper price than British ships would be able to serve British commerce. Those who thought that there would be protection would thus see that the contrary would be the case, because the cost of carriage by British ships would be more than that by the foreigners. There might be a little difficulty in the application of the Act, because a large number of vessels, when they left their loading port, did not know what their destination would be and called at specified ports for orders. Other difficulties might arise 'if foreign nations did not level up to our practices. He thought there was ground for hopefulness that foreign nations would gradually approximate to our standard, because recently by the Board of Trade regulations we had more nearly approximated to theirs. We had thus gone far on the way to prove that they had been right and we wrong. That fact, along with the legislation proposed by this Bill, made an ultimate international standard more easily attainable. The bringing of this Bill forward would probably lead to international conferences upon this subject, which might end in a state of things extremely satisfactory to all the nations concerned. He believed that the Government, had been wise in fixing the date when the Bill should come into operation at so remote a time as 1908. That would give ample opportunity for conferences and it would enable the various interests to come together and so make a common standard more likely. He would like to call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to a defect in the present law, which whilst limiting the liability of vessels launched the same as in the case of registered vessels, yet made a condition that registration must take place within three months from launching. In cases of large passenger ships this time limit was found to be too short. The intention of the Act was that they should be covered. He hoped that a clause would be introduced into this Bill to rectify this defect. He noticed that the Board of Trade had power to prevent any vessel from proceeding to a foreign port in a defective condition. Sometimes foreigners purchased British ships in a British port, or perhaps a foreign ship lying in a British port, and they frequently wanted to take them abroad to effect the repairs. He felt that under this Bill such a liberty could not be allowed. He had known cases of vessels so proceeding to ports in Spain and Norway, where they had very cheap and expeditious methods of effecting such repairs. He thought this Bill was a great advance in the right direction, and perhaps he might be allowed, as a ship-owner himself and as a Member of this House, to compliment the right hon. Gentleman on having brought in a Bill, comprehensive so far as it went, and well calculated to attain the objects which it professed. There was no doubt that in some matters of detail it might be improved. Upon the point of foreign pilots might he say a word with regard to national safety? He had not heard much of foreign pilots until he entered this House, and although he had thirty years' experience of shipping he had had no contact with them. He understood that they traded principally between the Continent and this country. they were familiar with the whole route, and what was of great importance, they knew their own ships as no pilot could know them. From the point of view of national safety he wished to point out that the foreign captain did not leave the ship although the British pilot came on board; consequently the foreign captain would still get that intimate knowledge of British waters and ports which it was thought advisable that he should not have. If it was desired to prevent these pilot-captains from having any knowledge which impinged upon the question of national safety they must be left at the river mouth.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said he was afraid he should have to trouble the House at some considerable length in regard to this Bill. He very much regretted that hon. Members on both sides of the House failed to avail themselves of the opportunity of reading the various Blue-books that had been published with regard to the reports of different Committees which have inquired into the shipping question. [AN HON. MEMBER: Life is too short.] At least hon. Members, before taking part in the debate on this question, should take the trouble to read up the minutes of evidence that had been given before these different Committees. At any rate, if hon. Members did not read those Blue-books they should be very careful with regard to any statements they might make in reference to lascars and other important questions affecting shipping. Several hon. Members had charged him with endeavouring to drive the lascars out of British ships. He had never attempted to do anything of the kind. He raised no objection whatever to the employment of lascars on British ships, but he did think that the lascar, when he was employed on our vessels, should not be brought in competition with our own men for the sole purpose of driving our own men out of the vessel. He was surprised at some hon. Members sitting on the Ministerial side, who had talked so much about Chinese Labour, and yet seemed to be in love with lascar labour, although the lascars were working under conditions which were worse than those under which Chinamen were working in the Transvaal. On the question of feeding alone—he maintained that the food that was given on many of our British ships to lascars was much worse than that given to the Chinamen in the compounds in the Transvaal. Again, on the question of pay, the Chinaman had a long way the advantage of the lascar on board the British ships. Those who employed lascars said they did not employ them on the ground of cheapness. He denied that entirely. The one reason for the employment of lascars was cheapness. Were hon. Members aware that lascars received in the way of wages as low a sum as 16s. per month for firemen, whilst the highest wages paid to a lascar fireman did not exceed 26s. a month? If they were going to consider those employed on British ships, and if they were going to consider lascars as British subjects, why not consider the conditions under which they worked as well as the conditions under which British seamen work? The lascar ought to have some consideration even at the hands of the House of Commons. He knew—and he thought he could speak with some authority on this question—that there was great dissatisfaction among the lascars themselves as to the manner in which they were treated. Some hon. Members had said that the lascar was more suitable for the tropical climates than the white man. If that were so, why not confine the employment of lascars to tropical climates? Why bring them into cold climates when they were not suited to that kind of work? His attitude in regard to lascars was this. When lascars were first employed on British ships their labour was confined to certain degrees of latitude, thirty-eight degrees North and thirty-eight degrees South. He thought some provision should be made under which lascars should not be employed on British vessels going into the high latitudes with the exception, of course, of the lascars employed on the mail boats trading to and from ports in the United Kingdom and ports in India. The lascar question, as far as it affects the Britisher, was in itself more serious than the way in which it affected the foreigner. He did not want to do anything to deprive the lascar of employment. As long as the shipowner could get lascars whom he could feed at 5d. a day and pay 20s. a month wages, he would not employ Britishers who would cost 1s. or 1s. 2d. a day for food and £4 10s. a month for wages. The shipowners who believed in cheap labour would give the preference to the lascar instead of the Britisher under these circumstances. If the lascar was confined to the coast of India or to certain latitudes 38° N. and 38° S. he should raise no objection to his employment at all. All he asked was that the lascar should not be brought into competition with the Britisher in this country, thus depriving British seamen of the chance of employment. It was not only the lascars they had to consider; they had also to consider the case of the Chinaman. There were a large number of Chinamen employed on British ships to-day.

It was said that all of them came from Hong-Kong, and they were described as natives of Hong-Kong. As a matter of fact, they were not natives of Hong-Kong, but that was entered into the articles of agreement as a matter of business. With regard to this measure itself, he had no hesitation in describing it as a shipowners' Bill and nothing else. The whole of its provisions, with one or two exceptions, were entirely in favour of the shipowner. On the introduction of the Bill he said that there were certain principles which he thought were very good, and which he thought would go a long way to improve the condition of the seamen. But now that he had got the Bill, and had gone carefully into every one of the clauses, he found that as far as the Bill applied to seamen in its present form it was an absolute failure. Unless the right honourable Gentleman would carry out his intention of throwing the Bill upon the mercy of the Committee he had no hopes of its success: but if he did that he had some hope that they might get a Bill that would really do some good for sailors and firemen. Let the House take the first part of the Bill with regard to the application of the British load-line and other regulations to foreign ships. He would just like to say, with reference to that part of the Bill, that they were confining the operations of the measure to ports in the United Kingdom. And why? Foreign ships trading to our ports in India came in competition with our British ships in foreign ports, and there was just as much danger for the foreign ship to be in an Indian port overladen as there would be in a port in the United Kingdom. The same principle applied to ports in our colonies. He understood that the Board of Trade said they could not apply this to our colonies because they had their own Merchant Shipping Acts. He did not agree with the President of the Board of Trade in that contention, because the Merchant Shipping Acts of Australia and New Zealand dealt only with vessels that were owned and registered in New Zealand and Australia, and not with our own ships that were registered in the United Kingdom. The same applied with regard to India. There was the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, which did not deal with vessels that were registered and owned in this country, but applied only to vessels that were registered and owned in India. So that he saw no reason—at least he would like to have some very good reason given—why this Bill, in applying the regulations to foreign ships, should not apply to all our British colonies and British possessions abroad. He thought the Government would do well to take that into their careful consideration and give the Bill a much wider application than was proposed now. Shipowners were well able to stand up for themselves, but he did support that part of the Bill on grounds of safety and not on grounds of protection. Some hon. Members on the Opposition side had endeavoured to make capital out of the Bill by saying that the Government were drifting towards protection by inserting certain clauses in a measure of this kind. He did not agree with them. He thought reasonable and fair-minded men would say that the Government were justified in endeavouring to protect even foreigners in our ports, or at least the lives of the men employed. They were not seeking to impose on foreign vessels regulations that did not apply to our ships. They were only asking that the foreigner should be subject once he was in our country and in our ports to the same supervision as any British subject. With regard to the portion o the Bill which dealt with the question of the seaman, the first part had reference to the question of seamen and their food. In Clause 2 of Section 20 there was a proposal which, when they got into Committee, he should certainly have something more to say about, and he would endeavour to move an Amendment to it, because in a way it robbed the seaman of his right to compensation where the owner of the ship had failed to supply the proper quantity of food. He maintained that if a shipowner engaged a man under an agreement to supply him with a certain quantity of food, and he failed to supply that food in accordance with agreement or Act of Parliament, the seaman was entitled to compensation if he could prove that the shipowner had not complied with his contract. The third part of the same section provided—

> "His Majesty may by Order in Council vary or add to the scale of provision set out in the First Schedule to this Act."

What was the good of inserting in an Act of Parliament a food scale, and then allowing the Board of Trade or anyone else to alter it, without bringing the matter before the House of Commons, by Order in Council? They would whittle that scale away. It was possible that they might add to it, but he was not at all alarmed that they would. But he had very great fear about taking away from it. That portion of the Bill did not recommend itself to him; and in Committee he should endeavour to have that clause removed. Then again, he was dissatisfied with the clause dealing with the inspection of provisions. That was Clause 21 and the sub-sections. What happened to-day with reference to the inspection of food? A ship was bound on a voyage, say, for two years and the food must be inspected under Act of Parliament. There was no provision made in this Bill as to the quantity of food that should be inspected before the voyage commenced, so that a shipowner could put three months' stores on board and have them inspected, and then after the ship had been away three months on the voyage he could take in inferior stores that would not be inspected, because the ship was on the voyage. He wanted to ask his right hon. friend if he thought that that was a sufficient safeguard of the interests of the seamen. If a shipowner engaged a crew for, say, twelve months, there ought to be twelve months' stores taken on board, and the whole of those stores should be inspected before the vessel sailed. As a matter of fact, at the present time a good many ships escaped their inspection because they started out on a voyage supposed to be for the Black Sea. Under the present law there was no inspection there, and when they got to the Black Sea they got a charter for India, and went through the Canal and the stores were not inspected at all. The result was that the men had to take inferior provisions during the whole of the voyage. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman's intentions would be to make this Bill at least a reasonable one, giving not only protection to the shipowner, but also some degree of protection to the seamen on board ship. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would take that matter into his serious consideration when they got into Committee, and that he would be ready to accept Amendments which would give some safeguard with regard to the interest of the men who were employed on the ship. His opinion was that the agreements now in existence were too long. The idea of signing men on steamers nowadays for three years! It was no advantage to a seaman to sign on for a three years' engagement. It did not mean that because he signed on for three years he would be kept on. As a matter of fact, he could be discharged at the end of a month if the vessel returned to the United Kingdom. It would be a great advantage if shipowners would cut down the period of agreements to six months or twelve months, because it was seldom that vessels went away for more than twelve months. There were cases where vessels remained away three or four years from the United Kingdom, but they were not very numerous. An average voyage would not exceed eight or nine months. The House had heard a lot about the cook. Considerable amusement was caused last week when this Bill was introduced with regard to the cook who was no cook at all. In the first place he did not know why the right hon. Gentleman proposed that they should wait until 1908 for this cook. He would like his right hon. friend just to note that. Why should they wait until 1908! [Cries of "To take out his degree" and "To prove his efficiency."] He thought they might have him at an earlier stage than that, and he would suggest that it should be 1907. But the remarkable point in regard to the clause was that the cook was only to be employed when vessels were leaving the British Islands. Surely, if it was a hardship for seamen to have to put up with ill-cooked food on vessels sailing from the United Kingdom, it must be equally a hardship in cases where British vessels engaged their crews, say, on the Continent, between the Elbe and Brest, and he would advise the right hon. Gentleman to extend that clause a bit. There was no reason why, wherever the crews were engaged, they should not have a good man for cook. But to qualify for the position of cook a man must be able to prove six months' service at sea in some capacity. He might have been a lower-deck sweeper with service for six months. Then, if he went to a school of cookery, he could ship as a full rate cook. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman seriously intended that to be so. They must have a little bit better qualification than that. Judging by the Bill, anyone could qualify for cook, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman in Committee would be ready to accept Amendments to ensure getting a cook that would give satisfaction. It was a very serious matter. The cook on board a ship was a very important man. Then he found that the Board of Trade were asking powers to dispense with this qualification altogether, if they thought fit. This was what the clause said—

> "If the requirements of this section are not complied with in the case of any ship, the master or owner of the ship shall, if those requirements have not been dispensed with under this section, and there is no sufficient reason for the failure to comply with the requirements, for each offence be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty-five pounds, but a prosecution under this section shall not be instituted otherwise than by, or with the consent of, the Board of Trade."

Why should they trouble the Board of Trade to prosecute in a case where they had not had a competent cook on board ship? He thought the right hon. Gentleman might leave it to the men themselves to raise an action if they had not been served with proper food. In regard to the question of the repatriation of seamen, it was quite evident that the Board of Trade had not given full consideration to the many recommendations that had been made by Committees appointed by this House. One of the strongest points that they could urge upon the right hon. Gentleman was the question of the sick seamen. Under the present regulations of the Board of Trade—he did not admit it was in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act—if a seaman in consequence of sickness, malaria, fever, rheumatism, pneumonia, or any other disease was left in a hospital abroad, the wages that might be due to that seaman were used for the purpose of paying the hospital expenses, and of conveying him, when convalescent, to a port in the United Kingdom. He had a case brought to his notice last week where a seaman had been for nine or ten months on a ship, and had unfortunately been seized with fever in one of the ports of Java. He was put on shore and at the time he left the ship there was due to him £23 for wages. He afterwards shifted from one port to another, and when he arrived in the United Kingdom he was informed that he was in debt to the Board of Trade to the extent of £3. This benevolent Department had seized the whole of this man's wages to defray the expense of his detention in the hospital and his conveyance home. Why should that be? If a man was shipwrecked he might have £100 due to him, and the expense of his conveyance home was thrown upon the shipowners. He maintained that a seaman who was shipwrecked in health was in a worse position than one who was shipwrecked by the loss of his ship, and yet the Board of Trade—as he thought, in defiance of the law—refused to pay his expenses. He had argued this point out with the Board of Trade for years, and had asked them to show him, if they could, under what Section of the Merchant Shipping Act they could take the wages of a sick seaman in order to pay for his hospital expenses and his conveyance to the United Kingdom. No man had been able to show him any section of the Merchant Shipping Act which justified that. He spoke with some degree of feeling on this point, because he was once a victim. He was laid up in the hospital at Constantinople with fever. He was a married man. He had £20 wages due to him, and he was told he would get that sum on arrival at Liverpool. However, when he got to Liverpool he was informed that he was £3 in debt to the Board of Trade, and he had no money to give his wife and no money to take him home, because all his wages had been taken to pay his expenses in the hospital and to reach Liverpool. This had been going on ever since 1854, and in his opinion, and in the opinion of a large number of legal gentlemen to whom he had submitted the section of the Merchant

Shipping Act, the Board of Trade had no right to throw the cost of the conveyance home of sick seamen on their wages. The right hon. Gentleman was dealing with this question in this Bill, but he was not dealing with the particular point to which he had referred, and if there was any doubt of the law on that point, now was the time to have it cleared up. He trusted that when they get into Committee an Amendment would be accepted dealing with the point. Section 207 of the Merchant Shipping Act provided that whenever a seaman received any hurt or injury on board ship, the owner should be responsible for hospital expenses and his conveyance home. He wanted to go a step further and apply "injury or hurt" to "illness." He was sure that shipowners generally would vote with him for such an Amendment. He did not believe that they would object to pay the expense of the conveyance home of men whose constitutions had been shattered in consequence of being taken to sickly climates against their will. He had known cases where men had been taken to ports in America where yellow fever prevailed, to go to which was almost certain death. When these men objected, they were threatened with imprisonment. In the case of one ship, out of a crew of twenty-four men not six got out alive; and yet those who had gone into hospital and survived were put to the expense of getting home to the United Kingdom, and their wages, on which their wives were depending, were used in paying the expenses incurred while they were in hospital. He was quite sure that on all sides of the House he would get support in making that point clear. In regard to the qualifications for able seamen, there again the Board of Trade were at fault. He did not blame his right hon. friend; he blamed the permanent officials. He could see the hand of the permanent officials in almost every line of this Bill and of legislation of this kind. The Bill proposed to reduce the qualifications for able seamen from four to three years sea service. Well, he did not object to that, and he would tell the House why. They did not require the kind of sailors on steamers that was formerly required on sailing ships. Sailing ships were disappearing, and therefore they could with safety accept men with only three years' sea service to qualify them as A.B's. But why, when they come to an engagement, had they the word "may" instead of the word "shall?" He held that the superintendent, when engaging a man as an able seaman, should insist on that man's having had the necessary sea service; he had no right to complete an agreement unless that man could comply with the law. An hon. Gentleman talked about boy sailors. One would imagin that there was a great scarcity of able seamen in this country. As a matter of fact there were more seamen in the labour market than could obtain employment. His hon. friend shook his head, but he invited him to come with him for a week's round of British ports, and he would surprise him as to the great difficulty which the men had in obtaining employment as seamen. There were scores of British seamen in every port who would tell him that they had been eight weeks out of employment and could not obtain a ship. He had had some experience on that point. He did not confine his labours to the House of Commons. He was very often to be found at different shipping ports and at the places where British seamen were engaged, and he was able to observe the number of men who could not get employment. There was also the question of stokers and men engaged in the firemen's department. His right hon. friend had lost sight of one of the most important Committees appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into the very important question of the manning of British ships. That Committee was appointed because a ship foundered in Brandon Bay and twenty-two valuable lives were lost in consequence of there not being a sufficient number of sailors on board to navigate the ship. In 1893 he moved for the appointment of the Committee, which was granted, and it sat under the chairmanship of Sir Edward Reed, one of the ablest men on shipping matters in this country. That Committee sat for two years and fully inquired into the manning of British ships, and drafted a manning scale for the deck department, and also for the stoke-hold. They recommended that where ships were undermanned, they were to be regarded as unseaworthy; and a Bill was passed through this House to make undermanned ships unseaworthy. But it was forgotten to pass a manning scale, and to say what undermanning really meant. The Committee, however, recommended many important reforms. One of them was that firemen or stokers on board ship should have a certain qualification; that no man should be entitled to be rated as a fireman unless he had six months of sea service as a trimmer. In the Royal Navy a fireman must be a man of good character, not under twenty-one years of age, nor above thirty-five, and able to prove two years' service, of which at least one year was as a fireman or trimmer. He wanted to know why we could not follow out the recommendation of the Manning Committee and give a qualification to firemen. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that there were very strong reasons for this. Very often there was trouble on board ship with firemen. And why? A ship would sign on six men; but in all probability three out of the six were not firemen at all, and not competent to do firemen's work; and when the vessel reached the Red Sea or got out into the main ocean in bad weather three of these men were unable to work. The consequence was that the other three had to do the work of six men. If they refused they could be charged with refusing to obey the lawful commands of the master and officers of the ship and were liable to be sentenced to be imprisoned for twelve weeks with or without hard labour. Why should not the Board of Trade protect the fireman from having incompetent colleagues? Why, also, should they not protect the shipowner by making a similar provision? If the shipowner engaged a fireman who was not a fireman he wasted the coal, and in that way injured the shipowner as well as causing his fellow workmen to run a risk which they ought not to be called upon to do. An incompetent stoker or fireman could destroy a ton of coal in twenty-four hours without producing any steam, and he recommended that men who had been employed on shore as stokers should have at least one month's experience as trimmers at sea in order to give them an opportunity of getting over their sea-sickness and getting their sea legs. In that way we should secure competent stokers and firemen. He was sure that that proposal would have the support of all Members in this House who were connected with the Navy, because it was of primary importance that we should get men who were qualified to do their work as firemen or stokers. In regard to the Act of 1886, he thought that the Government were altering it in such a way as would be unfavourable to the seamen. When this Bill got into Committee he should have something to say on that point, because it appeared to him that the Bill deprived seamen of certain privileges which they had at the present time. He passed on to another subject and came to the question of Naval Courts. A Naval Court did not mean, as many supposed, a Court composed of naval officers. It could be composed of a Consul, who might be the agent for the shipowner, and two captains of merchant ships. During the war between Russia and Japan there was a ship carrying contraband of war at Port Arthur when the Japanese bombarded the place. The vessel was in the line of fire, and the crew had a lively time for ten hours, one man being struck by a shell. Eventually they got to a port in Japan, and there found that their ship was chartered to run for a Japanese company for six months. The crew objected, and asked to be allowed to conclude their agreements. The captain refused, and no satisfaction could be got from the British Consul. Some of the British Consuls abroad had a very high and mighty way of dealing with seamen. This Consul summoned a Naval Court which was composed of himself and two captains, who themselves had been running contraband of war. The crew was brought before the Court, which, in less than one hour, the men having no opportunity to obtain legal defence, decided that the crew should be dismissed and forfeit the whole of their wages. That was a Naval Court, and according to the Merchant Shipping Act its finding was conclusive. That was to say, the two old merchant captains who ran contraband of war and one Consul

Mr. Havelock Wilson.

had a higher power than the highest Court in the land. He asked only for fair play in inviting the support of the House in clipping the wings of the Naval Courts. In regard to Advisory Committees, in his opinion they should be compulsory, and he thought it should be laid down that there should be equal representation of all parties upon them. They always liked to see the Board of Trade represented on these Committees, but they did not want too many representatives. They could get on all right with the shipowner on many points, and at all events they could agree to differ. In regard to the food scale, he understood that there was a suggestion that cocoa, tomatoes, and bacon should be omitted. Of course, the dietary of ships going certain voyages might have to be varied, but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider the matter, and see whether these articles could not be restored.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Aston Manor had persisted in describing this Bill as a protectionist measure, but it was nothing of the kind. Why should they suppose that to put a load-line upon a foreign ship was the same proposition as putting a tax on foreign goods? As to the protective character of this measure, the idea that the exclusion of foreign goods and the exclusion of foreign men from this country were parts of the same argument was really not tenable; in fact it was all the other way. Those very persons who wished to exclude foreign goods were always the same persons, in every other part of the world but this, who wished to have foreign workmen. Therefore, it was not reasonable to suggest that this was a protectionist measure. The second object of the Bill was, of course, one which had a different aspect, namely, to see that the great proportion of seamen who served on English ships were English. The right hon. Gentleman went a little too far in complaining of the decay of the number of British seamen serving in British ships, for, in point of fact, there were in the last thirty years 35,000 more than there were before. That number, of course, included those who served in the Navy. In endeavouring to secure a larger number of men of this country to man the ships they must remember how large was the number of ships which never came to England at all. His right hon. friend in his opening statement pointed out that half the trade in the world was carried in British ships. That was, he believed, the case; but he added that there were a certain number of those ships which never came into British ports at all, except at very long intervals. He was assured on very high authority that in point of fact one quarter of the whole was foreign trade carried in British ships which never came to this country at all. If that immense proportion of the tonnage of Great Britain never came to England at all, it was obviously very difficult to ensure that that proportion should be manned by Britishers, because he was assured on the same authority that British sailors would not remain on those ships; and he thought it would be hard to induce men to stay on ships which never came to England. He was assured by those who endeavoured to man our ships by British seamen that they found it very difficult to do so in the case of ships which never returned to this country. He entirely agreed that for reasons of strategy we should be well advised to adopt measures to secure a great proportion of Britishers in British ships. There were one or two smaller matters which had better be discussed in Committee; but he would ask his right hon. friend whether he considered it would be within the scope of this Bill to insert a provision by which some arrangements could be made for British seamen to vote by proxy at the general election. He knew that further provisions would have to be made in another Bill, but probably facilities might be given in this Bill also. It seemed to him to be a matter of some importance in which seamen took an interest. He believed that this could in no sense be described as a protective measure. The measure was in the best interests of the shipping industry, and he endorsed the opinion that in safeguarding the interests of the British shipowner they would be safeguarding the interests of the British seaman.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said shipowners in the country seemed to feel that they had not had sufficient opportunity to consider this Bill before the Second Reading. All he wished to ask the President of the Board of Trade was that he would assure the House that they would have ample opportunity of considering the Bill before it went before a Committee. He held a letter in which shipowners pointed out a good many matters which they considered of very great importance, and in which he agreed with them. But he would not take up the time of the House by going carefully into these points, because there would be opportunity to consider them in Committee. There were one or two matters, however, he wished to mention. In regard to the diet scale, he could not see why the Board of Trade should alter that. As to the load-line, he was afraid there were many men, not only in this House but in the country, who had not a very kindly feeling towards shipowners, and he had frequently heard it said that this load-line had to be imposed because steamers were wilfully lost in order to recover insurance. He had not heard anything of that kind lately, but he should like to point out that the shipowners with regard to that load-line had suffered under a very great disqualification in competing with foreign ships; and what had happened? First, a load-line was imposed upon shipowners which was far beyond what was required for safety. [Cries of "No."] The load-line was altered within a very short time. Since then they had had considerable experience—he did not refer to shipowners only of this country, but of all countries. What was the fact to-day? For example, Germany in many of its ports had required a load-line, but they had found, so far as the load-line for English vessels was concerned, it was considerably more than what was absolutely required for safety. What were they doing to-day? They were levelling down the load-line to what the Germans had been doing for some time, and they must admit that unquestionably a mistake had been made in that respect, and that the British shipowners in comparison with the foreign shipowners have been suffering under a very great injustice and disqualification. That had been admitted on all hands. The Board of Trade were now regulating the load-line on the same lines as foreign nations. He mentioned this fact to show that, after all, there was generally something to be said on both sides, and that mistakes might be made in trying to do too much as well as too little. He hoped that when the Bill emerged from Committee it would give satisfaction both to British shipowners and to British sailors, and that no further attempt would be made for some years to interfere with trade, because continual interference with trade of this description must do a very large amount of harm not only to the owners, but also to the men.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The debate this afternoon has partaken very largely of the nature of a Committee discussion, and I think we ought to be very glad that that is the case. There has been no attack upon the principle of the Bill; it has been purely a criticism of details. Some of those criticisms, I think, had a good deal of force in them, and some, I must say, were not well grounded; but they are more or less Committee points. I do not think hon. Members will find that the Government will resist any reasonable Amendment which is submitted for the purpose of amending or strengthening the Bill in any way. Some of the criticisms are directed to saying that we have gone too far, others that we have not gone quite far enough. That proves that we have taken the middle course, which is generally thought to be the course of safety. I shall endeavour to answer most of the points, although I am afraid I cannot answer every one. The hon. Baronet who represents the shipowners—and, if I may, I wish to acknowledge the assistance whichhe gave before the Bill was introduced—wanted us to give ample time to shipowners to consider the details of the Bill before it went to the Standing Committee to which I propose that the Bill be sent. I am afraid that this is not in our hands. He need not apprehend any danger on that score. There are two Bills before that Committee, and I think it will take some time before they are cleared out of the way; and so I think there will be ample time for the consideration of all details of the measure before that Committee begins its work. The only other point made by the hon. baronet to which I should like to refer, is that in which he objects to our having any power to alter the food scale. One hon. Gentleman is afraid that if we exercise some of our dispensing powers it will be rather to the detriment of the seamen; while another hon. Gentleman said it would impose additional burdens on the shipowners. Therefore, I think on the whole the Board of Trade may be trusted.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I did not object to alterations being made if made by a Committee representative of all Parties.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is why I have put an Advisory Committee in the Bill. I quite agree that those whose interests are primarily affected should be consulted before any alteration is introduced, not merely with regard to the food scale but with regard to the load-line and other matters. Now I come to the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, who regards this as a shipowners' Bill. It is the first Bill that has ever been characterised as a shipowners' Bill, and I am surprised he should so term it. A food scale and a certificated cook would be, I should have thought, in the interests of the sailors; but I am perfectly certain that if the hon. Gentleman says they are of no use to the sailors, the shipowners will not object to their elimination from the Bill. The hon. Gentleman was rather keen on tomatoes; in fact, there was quite a pathos in his voice when he mentioned them. I can assure him that the food scale has been considered very carefully, and it is on the whole a better food scale than that in the Navy; and therefore I do not think we can enforce anything better at the present moment. It is not for the House of Commons to turn round on the private shipowners and say, "Although we will not vote money to improve the food scale of the Navy, we are going to compel you to improve your scale." The first example should certainly be set by the House of Commons itself. The other point raised by the hon. Gentleman is the question of distressed seamen. It struck me that he made out a very strong case for Amendment. The question raised as to trimmers and firemen and other matters are questions to be looked into, but they are all matters of detail which I do not think it advisable to go into at the present moment. As regards the Naval courts, I am not quite sure whether there would not be an appeal on a point of law in such a case as has been mentioned. At any rate, I will promise to look into it, and I certainly think there ought to be. But I do not understand the objections to the clause, which is entirely in the interests of the seamen. In the case of Panama or Sierra Leone, where prisons are exceedingly bad and where imprisonment may be fatal, I am sure the men would prefer to be sent home to a decent gaol. My hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool was perfectly right in regard to foreign trade. I am told it is absolutely impossible to get British sailors to remain on British ships that trade for years between one foreign port and another. You may get officers, and as a matter of fact you do get officers, but you cannot get sailors to do it; and the result is that the owners of these ships are driven, if they are to run their ships at all, to get foreign sailors in such circumstances. My hon. and gallant friend asked me a question with regard to the proportion of the international carrying trade of Great Britain which is conveyed between one port and another. There are no reliable statistics on the point, but I do not think he has guessed far wrong. It is something like one-third or one-half, but it is a matter of pure conjecture. Then he put a question with regard to voting by sailors. I am entirely in sympathy with the object, but I am very much afraid it does not come within the four corners of this Bill; it is a matter for the Home Office. He might however, introduce the matter by an Amendment, though I do not think it would come properly within this Bill. This Bill is to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, and there is nothing whatever in regard to elections in that Act. I should like to say a word or two in regard to what fell from the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Croydon. I understand, on the whole, that he rather approves of the Bill, though he passed some criticisms upon it. One of those criticisms was passed by several other hon. Members who took part in the discussion. It was in regard to alien pilots. I made a statement on the First Reading of the Bill with regard to alien pilots. I said it was very largely a matter of our Treaty obligations, and, before introducing the Bill, I submitted the matter to the law officers of the Crown. I am sorry to say I have not yet had their opinion on the subject, but from what I have heard I think it is extremely likely that we may be able to do something on that point. It would be wrong for me, however, to pledge myself on that subject until I receive their opinion; but I may say there is no objection in principle, so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, to introduce some clause dealing with this matter. I put it entirely on the ground of national safety. If the right hon. Gentleman looks into the Report of the Select Committee on Pilotage he will find that the view, as regards national safety, was supported with ananimity by the Trinity House of London, and other witnesses.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Admiralty.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I know there is one witness from the Admiralty who did not take that view, but I think, on the whole, the evidence was that they considered it a matter of national safety, that there was a certain element of national danger in giving certificates to foreign pilots, and that is the view His Majesty's Government take with regard to the matter. I rather think the right hon. Gentleman exaggerated the number of such certificates; there are only eighty-five of these certificates in all. It is not a very big matter, but at the same time my personal view is that they should not be granted.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Are those certificates growing gradually? Eighty-five may become 285 if they are not stopped.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that they have not grown since I have been in the Board of Trade.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): Does the right hon. Gentleman know that a Return was made in March last? Has there not been one since that date?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I made inquiry into the matter about six weeks ago, and that was the figure given to me at the time. Whether that figure was made up to March last I cannot tell, but I do not think they have increased at all since March last. I am only putting this figure to show that from whatever point of view, it is not a very big question. It is a very small proportion of the total number of pilots. I hope that the House is now satisfied with regard to that point. As far as the Government is concerned there is no resistance in principle to the introduction of a clause doing away with these alien pilots. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has put some other points which I think are rather more controversial. He seems to suspect the Government of other motives in introducing this Bill. He acknowledged that the motive of humanity was probably all powerful, but he thought it was just possible the Government might have some other motives as well. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that after all the motive of humanity was the most powerful one. What the incidental effect of the Bill may be is quite another question. The hon. Member for Newcastle thinks this Bill will not have a protective effect, and I think he is a very competent judge. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that the chief motive, in fact the dominant motive, which really influenced the Government in introducing this Bill was the motive of humanity and safety for sailors. It is exactly as if foreigners had been allowed by the law of the land to erect a factory in this country which should not be subject to the factory legislation applicable to other factories here. We are not dealing in this Bill with anything except what happens inside our own territorial waters. It simply means that until this Bill was introduced what was an offence against the law, and a criminal offence rendering the perpetrator liable to punishment by fine in the case of British subjects, was not an offence at all if committed by foreigners. That is exactly as if a foreigner had erected a factory in this country which was not subject to our factory regulations, which have been set up to protect the life and limb of Britishers. Supposing there was an instance of that sort, and the Government said "You must make the same regulations as are applicable to British subjects applicable to foreigners who build factories in this country." That is not protection; it is simply saying to the foreigner, "If you wish to come to our territories you must, of course, conform to our laws." That is the whole principle of free trade, which means that you deal with the foreigner exactly as you do with a Britisher. We have the same laws for both, and equal rights for both, within British territory, and that is the principle of free trade. The right hon. Gentleman opposite apparently does not understand the principles of his own creed, and really it seems to me that it is an example of the loose thinking that has occurred during this tariff reform agitation. If we were proposing to interfere on the high seas, that would of course be a different matter. The right hon. Gentleman really made a case against his own argument in the latter part of his speech, because he said "If you are going to interfere with the load line, why not interfere with wages and the question of accommodation?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I said that that was what the right hon. Gentleman's supporters had put forward.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that there was no distinction in principle.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, I did say that.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: But there is a very essential difference. The principle of our Bill is the safety of human life, and such questions as accommodation and wages do not affect directly the safety of life like the question of the load line. That is a clear distinction of principle upon which we are proceeding, and the principle on which the right hon. Gentleman is founding his protection theory. The right hon. Gentleman says we are interfering with foreign sailors on British ships, and asks us why we were doing that. He does not, however, challenge the action of the Government, but he does challenge our motive. He is trying to probe into the bosoms of the promoters of this Bill in order to find out what is their motive in introducing it. We say again, that our motive is safety.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Does that apply to lascars?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am coming to that presently. The right hon. Gentleman asked us what evidence is there that this Bill will affect the safety of ships at all. Evidently he has not read the evidence upon this question. I quoted two or three cases when I introduced this Bill, and they were very strong cases indeed.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I stated that there were a great many other cases of this description which are not touched by this Bill.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do not see the point of the argument put forward by the right hon. Gentleman. In his speech he asks, "What evidence is there?" He now says that there is abundant evidence that the safety of ships is affected by the fact that you have sailors on board who do not understand the language used by the master of the ship. That shows, I think, that His Majesty's Government are prompted, and rightly prompted, upon ample evidence, by the one consideration of the safety of the ship. That is the ground upon which we are interfering. We are not interfering in order to exclude foreigners, but to secure the safety of limb and life on British ships, and there is abundant ground and evidence to justify our doing so. The right hon. Gentleman says, "If you are going to interfere in this way, why not interfere with the lascars?" That case is very different, as anyone who knows anything about the employment of lascars could tell the right hon. Gentleman. In this case you have officers specially employed to interpret between the lascars and those in command of the ship and the officers. They have a perfect knowledge of the kind of language necessary to carry out our orders on board ship. I do not say that we impose such a test as asking the lascars to translate a *Daily Telegraph* article into English, or anything of that sort. But you must have some kind of a test. Here you have several officers on board a ship able to take their orders from the officers, and they are specially employed for that purpose, but if you take a foreign sailor you have nothing of that sort. He takes his orders direct from the officer, and in the cases which I quoted last week the foreigners did not understand our language at all. There was the case of a look-out man who did not understand a word of English, and the House will remember that the man who held the lifeboat cut the rope by mistake because he did not understand the order which was given, or lost his head, and did not know what to do under the circumstances, with the result that a number of lives were lost. This is purely a question of safety. I know there are cases in reference to foreign sailors, but I defy the right hon. Gentleman to produce a single case where a ship has been wrecked owing to the fact that the lascars did not understand the word of command. If he can produce evidence of that kind, then I say that he will have made out a case for reconsidering even the question of the lascars, but not until then. So much for the protectionist capital which the right hon. Gentleman has attempted to make out of this Bill. The hon. Member for Aston Manor raised two or three points which, from his long experience upon Shipping Committees in this House, are entitled to every consideration. There is one of those criticisms which I thought was especially very sound as a suggestion, and that is that we should keep strictly on the ground of safety. I hope hon. Members will confine their criticism strictly to the question of safety. Another piece of advice which he gave was that we should not interfere vexatiously with foreign ships, and I say that we know the importance of that, for it would be very unwise if we imposed our special kind of appliances upon countries where they may have got something quite equal to our own. I know the risk of that. I remember at one time that the United States Government looked as if they were going to impose upon us their own special regulations, which would have compelled us practically to have adopted two sets of life-saving applicances on board our great liners. Those appliances would have been no use on this side because they would not comply with the regulations, whereas, on the other hand, our appliances did not conform to the regulations of the United States of America. I am glad that the United States of America took a sensible view, and I agree that it is important that we should interpret these regulations liberally when we come to deal with foreign countries which are doing their very best to save life upon more or less the same lines as those which we have been following for a good many years. The other point put to me was with regard to Advisory Committees. The hon. Member thought the Board of Trade was too apt to act upon its own initiative without consulting those interested. I am not quite so sure that that is a fair criticism, because the Board of Trade within the last ten or fifteen years has consulted those interested by appointing one or two Advisory Committees, one of which is sitting at the present moment with regard to the load line rules. There was an Advisory Committee, and the Board of Trade acted upon their advice, and I think that is the case more or less all round. Still I think the way in which these Advisory Committees are working justifies the Board of Trade in extending the experiment to other matters. When you come to deal with a subject like this it is very important that you should consult those who are interested. I think those we consulted represented a very important interest in the shipping and mercantile marine of this country, which ought to be consulted upon matters affecting the safety of the lives of the men employed on board ship. I think I have now dealt with most of the points which have been raised.

LORD R. CECIL: There is still the question of some international agreement.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am afraid that the result of our investigations are not very encouraging, although I think this Bill will help matters by-and-bye. I am inclined to think that other countries will feel it so inconvenient to see one rule established for one country and another rule for another country, that they will feel it desirable to have some kind of international agreement to prevent complications. I trust that one result of the Bill will be that foreign Powers will see the wisdom of coming to some sort of common understanding of this kind. I agree that the point raised by the hon. Member is an exceedingly important one. I come now to another point raised by the hon. Member for Durham with regard to the measurement of tonnage. That is a very important matter, and I am not sure that it could come within the four corners of this Bill. It is a very complicated subject. I have gone into it within the last few days especially, and I find that a Committee, presided over by Mr. Bonar Law, is sitting on it. It has done nothing since August, and I cannot say who is responsible for the delay in reporting. I have done my very best to try to induce the Committee to report at the earliest possible moment, and I think it is desirable to get an early Report on the subject. When the Report is received I will consider whether anything can be put into this Bill on the subject. It is rather more controversial than anything I have introduced in the Bill up to the present. I want to avoid these controversial matters in a Bill of this character. There is considerable conflict between two powerful interests when you come to deal with the question of tonnage, and I am not sure that it would conduce to the smooth passage of the Bill through the Committee to introduce the question of tonnage at all. However I will bear it in mind when the Report of the Committee arrives.

MR. LAMBTON: Will not this Bill hang up the question?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It will hardly do that, for it does not deal with the question at all, but I think it is premature to try to deal with it until we get the Report of the Committee. I think the hon. Gentleman will agree in that. Another point put by him was with regard to the space for seamen. That is really a very important matter, and I was very glad to hear him say that as a rule the space allowed by law is considerably exceeded as a matter of fact. That is the case undoubtedly, but still there is considerable evidence that the accommodation accorded to sailors on British ships, especially sailing ships, has something to do with the reluctance of men to take to the sea as a profession. The witnesses who gave evidence on that matter were all agreed that the accommodation provided had a good deal to do with the fact that boys do not care very much to take to the sea, and that after the experiment of a voyage or two they get very sick of it. That is a matter which will be brought before the Committee, and I promise to consider any Amendments submitted to me on that subject. I think I have dealt with all the questions put to me. I do not recollect any other salient point which has been raised in the course of this discussion, with which I could deal at the present moment. I appeal to the House to give a Second Reading to the Bill, and to refer it to the Committee on Trade. Since it is a Bill about which there is such general agreement, I am sure the right hon. Gentleman opposite would not care to delay the matter by refusing permission to send it to the Committee on Trade.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I think the appeal which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has made is very reasonable, and certainly no opposition to it will come from this side of the House. I think this is a case in which the Bill may very properly be referred to the Committee on Trade. The right hon. Gentleman is to be congratulated on the manner in which the Bill has been received and treated. The Bill is in no sense a contentious or controversial measure. I am a little sorry that in the speech just delivered he did say a few words which were unnecessarily controversial as to what was said by my right hon. friend. I would like to point out to him that I think he has misunderstood what my right hon. friend really said. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade appears to think that my right hon. friend or others on this side of the House were imputing to the Government, and himself in particular, some hidden motives for the introduction of this Bill. I assure him that is not the case. We are perfectly content to accept his own statement as to the motives which have animated the Government and are quite ready to acknowledge that the main object of the Bill, at any rate, has been humanity and the safety of the lives of those who go to sea. That we admit, but then I think he went on to suggest that my right hon. friend wished to impute to them some protectionist motives, as he said, and to gain thereby support for his own protectionist policy. When did my right hon. friend advocate a protectionist policy? I am sure that the President of the Board of Trade will, in the same way as I have just done, give all of us credit for being animated by the motives which we have admitted in his case. I do not think that the question of protection, otherwise than as I have indicated protection of life and the safety of ships, enters into this Bill at all. Although I say that is the object of the Government in introducing the Bill, I cannot help pointing out that there are many measures which we might take, which have the definite and sole object of saving life, or giving greater security as a main condition, which may incidentally have the effect, not of granting protection to life merely, but of securing fair competition, and that is what we have claimed to be distinctively the policy of the Party on this side of the House. It is perfectly clear that in this Bill you are removing—although that is not your object and I quite understand that you are almost sorry it should be the effect—a grievance which, I think, is a serious one both from shipowners and from sailors who have hitherto been subjected to the competition of foreigners who are not subject to the same laws and the same conditions our sailors and shipowners are subject to. There is only one other point to which I shall refer. It is rather curious, I think, that the right hon. Gentleman omitted to reply to what after all is a most serious question, which was referred to by my right hon. friend and others. It was to the effect that the right hon. Gentleman should further consider the provisions of the Bill for securing that a larger proportion of the seamen on British ships should be British sailors. I venture to regard these provisions as altogether inadequate to secure the object which, I believe, the Government have in view, and which certainly the majority of this House have in view. I remember that that is part of the general principle of the Bill. It is a question partly I think of the safety of the ship, but certainly it is a question of the security of the seamen, and on the larger national ground of national defence I think we all feel that it is a desirable thing in every possible way to encourage, and, if necessary, even to insist upon, a larger proportion of seamen of British origin on our ships. I understand the difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman felt when he introduced a Bill with regard to this subject. He had been told that there was not a sufficient supply of seamen, and that to prescribe that a certain proportion—a much larger proportion than at present—of the crew should be British would be to cause a number of ships to be withdrawn inasmuch as their crews could not be found. Well, I do not know who gave him that information, but the information which has come to me does not confirm it. I doubt very much whether the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, who speaks with authority on behalf of the British seamen, will agree. We maintain that a large number of British seamen are out of employment, and that accordingly there will be no difficulty at all in making greater drafts upon them and finding them employment, not only in their own interests but in the interests of the country at large. The right hon. Gentleman says that in British ships trading between one foreign port and another there is a difficulty in retaining British seamen, as I understand it, because the British seaman wants from time to time to come home. Therefore, that foreign service is not popular. But we cannot judge as to that unless we have full statistics in our possession. I should like to know how many British ships which do not confine themselves to foreign voyages have foreign seamen as members of their crews. At all events, to my mind, this is, I was going to say, the only unsatisfactory point in the Bill. It is a most serious point to which I attach the greatest possible importance. I do not know whether I would be competent to move myself in the matter, but I should be inclined to support any Motion made in order to secure a proper remedy for the evil which is confessed, and to provide that a fixed percentage should be established as the maximum to be allowed in the crew of a British ship to be supplied by foreign seamen. I do not see why the right hon. Gentleman should not be as gracious to British shipowners as to foreign shipowners; but if he feels that any change in that respect would be prejudicial to foreign shipowners if brought forward too speedily, he might allow the arrangement to stand over for a year or two.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It was a great failure when it was tried before.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Still, I understand it is the remedy put forward by those most concerned—by the representatives of the sailors. They have always insisted that that is the only remedy, short, indeed, of the entire prohibition of the employment of foreign seamen. This matter should have the consideration of the Government, otherwise we shall have to deal with it at a subsequent stage of the Bill.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) asked whether it was not possible to apply these rules as to the load line to any ships coming from India, the Crown Colonies, or the other Colonies. At any rate, we should apply them to the Crown Colonies under our own control; and we should ask India to join with us for the sake of humanity in imposing the load line rules on all ships sailing from her ports. He would go further and ask the self-governing Colonies to do the same thing. We had been told by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies that we had powers to veto legislation passed by the self-governing Colonies contrary to the wishes of this House in regard to labour; and surely we could exercise that veto in a much stronger manner when it concerned the safety, the comfort, and the lives of our sailors. Therefore, he appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to make this measure complete in order that it should apply not only to the United Kingdom but to India, the Crown Colonies, and the self-governing Colonies.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham) said he was satisfied with the explanation which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had given of this Bill. The primary object of the Bill was the safety of the lives of our sailors, and, after looking through all the clauses he entirely agreed that that was the aim of the right hon. Gentleman. It was satisfactory to find that foreign ships would have to comply with the same regulations in regard to the prevention of the shifting of cargo as British ships, which regulations were necessary for the safety of the ship and crew. The shifting boards throughout the bulkheads to prevent the shifting of the cargo were erected by the ship's carpenter, who was responsible for the whole construction of the vessel from keel to truck. The carpenter was excluded from the operation of the Act in so far as the Bill made no provision that he should be a qualified and certificated workman. It was absolutely necessary that greater care should be taken in the manning of the ship, in order to see that the men shipped were efficient and qualified to do their work. The right hon. Gentleman had taken care that under this Bill this should be secured in regard to certain classes of workers. He had decided that even the cooks should show that they were in some way efficient. If it was necessary that the chief officer, as well as the masters and others including the cook, should show that they were qualified, why was it not necessary that the same provision should be made in the case of a ship's carpenter? He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would not consider the advisability of inserting Amendments calling upon these men to show that they were qualified for the positions which they desired to occupy.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

DOGS BILL.

Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he did not propose to move the Amendment which stood in his name upon the Paper as he had received a sympathetic assurance from the Government with reference to his principal objections. He merely wished to offer a few remarks upon the measure. He objected to the Bill on various grounds, the principal one being that Clause 4 took away from the small farmers and crofters of the country the privilege which they had enjoyed for a very long time of keeping a sheep dog on the ground that it was essential to their trade. Under this clause that right was practically entirely set aside, and therefore those who represented agricultural constituencies were perfectly justified in opposing the Bill. He had an assurance that this question would be considered in Committee. In his judgment the matter was dealt with by the Bill in a most objectionable manner. Farmers and crofters could not and should not be asked to appear before a petty sessions court or sheriff substitute to get what was theirs by right. He cordially sympathised with the idea that the exemption which farmers had enjoyed for a long time past should not be abused, but he thought that, although safeguards might be introduced, the privilege should not altogether be taken away. The second part of the Bill was not quite so objectionable, and as he had obtained an assurance that the question about sheep dog licences would be considered an open one in Committee, he would not act upon his notice to move the rejection of the Bill. He complained that in Clause 2 the Board of Agriculture took power to compel certain dogs to wear collars, showing the name of their owners. If a rule of that kind was to be laid down, the House ought to enact that every dog should wear a collar. There should be no favouritism in this matter. He understood that that clause would not apply to sporting dogs; they were to be allowed to roam over the country without collars. It was not fair to the farmers that their dogs should have to go about with this badge and that other dogs should not. He would be quite content if the President of the Board of Agriculture laid down the principle that every dog should wear a collar with the name of the county and a number on it, by which the owner might be identified. The experience in the north was that sheep worrying was done not by the farmers' dogs, but by wandering dogs belonging to other people. The principal offenders were sporting dogs and pet dogs. These were the principal matters to which he took exception, and he trusted that the Government would, when the matter came before the Committee on Trade, give a sympathetic and attentive hearing to those who represented the small farmers in the country, and put this Bill on a fairer and more equitable basis.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland had found fault with Clause 4 of this Bill, but the hon. Member had not paid sufficient attention to the gravity of this question or to the feeling in Scotland and other parts of the country with regard to it. The enormous number of exemptions granted, and the free and easy manner in which they were obtained, had resulted in a great amount of evil. When the President of the Board of Agriculture addressed the House on this question last year he showed that in the county of Montgomeryshire there were 1,747 licences issued and no less than 6,220 exemptions granted. In the county of Dumfries there were 4,471 licences issued and 1,200 exemptions granted. Such a state of affairs called for remedy. In the county of Inverness there were 2,743 licences issued and 17,772 exemptions granted. He thought the hon. Member in charge of this Bill was right in bringing something forward to deal with that serious state of affairs. The feeling in the country districts of Scotland was very strong upon this matter. The ravages committed among the flocks of sheep and the cruel destruction of valuable ewes by wandering collies getting among the sheep and massacring vast numbers of them was a matter that required some remedy, and he did not think it was too much to ask a man before he obtained an exemption to show that his collie was a *bona fide* sheep dog. The Bill, in his opinion, was one that was well worthy of the attention of agriculturalists in this country, and he hoped it would receive the assent of this House.

Mr. MARNHAM (Surrey, Chertsey) gave the Bill hearty support. Its necessity was shown not only in Scotland but in this country as well. Two or three weeks ago there was a case in Surrey—one of a series of cases—in which a farmer during one night lost no less than fifty ewes and lambs from dog-worrying. It was a very serious thing for a comparatively small farmer to have such a terrible loss inflicted and no means of recompense. Too often no trace of the dog was left and therefore no damages could be applied for. Of course, if they could detect the dog, and the owner was a man of substance, some satisfaction might be obtained; but if, as unfortunately was very often the case, the dog belonged to a poor man the sheep-owner had no means of recompense. If anything could be done to check this growing evil and to lessen the serious loss to which farmers were often put now, he did not think any dog-owner ought to mind a little inconvenience He hoped the Bill would receive the unanimous support of the House.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said it was apparent that the House was in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill. He gathered that the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland agreed that it was desirable that something ought to be done. It was quite clear that the objections were matters for Committee, and he could assure the hon. Member that his objections would be considered by the Board of Agriculture in the most sympathetic spirit. He agreed that the exemptions that had been allowed had been abused both in Scotland and in England, and that more stringent regulations in this respect were required. The Board of Agriculture had power to delegate the making of regulations to local authorities, and he thought that that power would be largely exercised. Might he appeal to the House to give the Bill a Second Reading at once, as all were agreed on the merits, and it was hardly necessary to go into details now? The Bill would be sent to the Standing Committee, where all objections would be considered. There was not the slightest desire on the part of the Board of Agriculture to treat the Bill as an inspired document. Quite the contrary. Suggestions for improvements would be considered with fullest sympathy. The object of the Government was to get a good Bill, and to protect the country from the great curse of sheep-worrying.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said an idea had been expressed that the great danger from which the Bill was supposed to protect sheep-owners was one arising from dogs which lived in a state of luxury and occasionally went out on the rampage. In his experience, however, the sheep-worrying dogs generally hunted in couples, and they were not dogs kept in luxury, but professional mutton-killers. The man-eating tiger was an analogy. He agreed with the suggestion that it would be wrong to discriminate between the dog of one person and that of another, and he could not see why it should not be to the public advantage to have some distinctive collar so that the owner could be identified if need be. He hoped the Bill would diminish the large number of casual dogs kept often for mischievous purposes, besides diminishing the damage done to farmers by the destruction of their sheep.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University) said he was not going to speak upon the merits of this Bill. Last year he was associated with the then President of the Board of Agriculture in trying to pass it through this House. He merely rose to ask the hon. Baronet if he would reconsider his decision to send the Bill to a Committee upstairs. If the hon. Baronet inquired he would find that there was a good deal of feeling about the Bill in various quarters of the House.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said the main purpose of the Bill was to make owners of dogs responsible for damage done to flocks, but it left untouched the very important question, which ought to be dealt with by Parliament, as to the responsibility of owners for injuries done by their dogs to men. He hoped the Government would consider whether they could not amend the Bill in Committee, so that the owner of a dog which injured a man should be responsible for the injury.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. Member can bring "man" within the term "live stock."

Lord R. CECIL said the Bill was also "otherwise to amend the law relating to dogs." It was on that part of the title that he ventured respectfully to submit that he was entitled to raise the point he had. The condition of the law on the subject at present was an absurdity. Whereas a man was responsible for anything that his human servant did, even if it were done in spite of the direct instructions given to that servant, that did not apply to a dog unless it could be shown that the dog was vicious, in the knowledge of its owner. Yet a dog's bite might destroy the power of a bread-winner for weeks and months. It was sometimes put in a crude but incorrect way that every dog was entitled to one bite. That was an absurd position, and he asked the Government to consider the advisability of amending the law.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said he did not know any statute that had ever made a definition of "cattle," and it had always been a moot point whether the term included sheep. He should certainly not think it would include ponies, and he would therefore suggest that the words "to any cattle" should be left out in Clause 1, so that it would be quite clear that damage done to ponies by dogs would permit of a remedy. Section 2 seemed to introduce an entirely new principle into English law by which the person against whom damages were claimed would have to prove that he was not the person who ought to pay those damages.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Sir H. AUBREY-FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) said that this Bill was a most important measure connected with agriculture, and was to carry into effect the recommendations of a Departmental Committee. The House ought certainly to have some explanation from the hon. Baronet. A considerable sum of money would have to be provided by the Treasury for the payment of the chief analyst, who was not to engage in private practice while holding the office.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

*MR. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne), in rising to move, "That in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to withdraw from the Sugar Convention," said there had been many reasons given for the result of the general election, and those who sat on the Liberal side of the House had been taken to task for the many promises which they made during the election campaign. He thought the House would agree that there was not a single Member who sat on that side of the House, who did not promise and pledge himself that when returned to this House he would do his best to alter the legislation of the late Government. He ventured to think that of all the follies associated with the late administration, nothing was quite so silly as the Brussels Sugar Convention, to which he proposed to draw attention. Since he had given notice of this Motion he had read the speeches delivered in this House in the debates upon that question, and to those who held the views he held on this matter it was very gratifying to find that the right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Front Government Bench had been the strongest in their denunciation of the Brussels Sugar Convention. All he was anxious about was that there should be consistency of policy, and that now a Liberal Government was in office they would not find right hon. Gentlemen on the Government Bench advocating views different from those they expressed when sitting on the opposite side of the House. It was interesting to find, when this question first came before the House in November, 1902, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham described the Convention, in the most flattering terms, as a free-trade measure. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman did not then speak as a disciple of Cobden, and a great advocate of free-trade principles. The right hon. Gentleman the junior Member for the City of London, when the question came up on the second occasion, told the House that the result of the Sugar Convention would be to lower prices, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham at the same time prophesied that we should see no advance in the price of sugar. When the prophecy was made, they in Lancashire invested largely in sugar, with the result that many of them made sufficient out of the increased price of sugar to pay the increased expenditure they were called upon to pay as the result of his influence on the policy of the Government. He had looked through the speeches delivered in favour of the measure, and found, when they dismissed all this talk of Empire and came down to facts, that the Sugar Convention was to benefit two classes of individuals and two classes alone. In the first place, it was to benefit the West Indies. The competition to which the West Indies had had to submit had had one very good result. In the last twenty years it had brought down the cost of the production of sugar to one half, and he ventured to think that with a sound system of finance and proper machinery the West Indies could produce sugar to-day more cheaply than it could be produced anywhere else in the world. It was singular, in view of the recent agitation, to realise, if they could assume—and the assumption was a great one—that hon. Members opposite had been returned by a majority and had put their fiscal policy into operation, that the West Indies would have been absolutely excluded from preferential benefits, whilst since the Convention they have had to submit to the serious competition of Germany, Austria and France in the market of the United, States, "the natural market of the West Indies," and from which Bounty-fed sugar is excluded. The refiner, who was the other person who was to benefit, was in a position totally different from that of the producer in the West Indies. The refiner wanted his raw sugar as cheap as he could get it, but wished to get as big a price as possible for the refined article, whilst the producer in the West Indies wanted the highest price for the raw material. The refiners in this country were nothing like so badly off as people had been led to believe. Up to date the refiners had made more money than any other class in this country, with the exception, perhaps, of the brewers. Where they had considered and kept to the requirements of the consumers they had made a great success of sugar refining. But where men refined sugar with antiquated machinery, and turned out a product which the retailer did not want, and which therefore had to be sold at a reduced figure, they were not likely to be prosperous. Even with the Sugar Convention one of the biggest sugar refiners in this country had just gone into liquidation. The foreign refiners and producers in their desire to secure the English market had entered into a policy of such senseless competition that they had brought the price of sugar in England down to 6s. a cwt. Supposing that insane policy had been continued, and we had had sugar brought into this country for nothing, would that or would it not have been a benefit to this country? There were nine producing countries and one consuming country entered the Sugar Convention. We were the largest consumers of sugar in the world. We consumed four times as much as any European nation, and yet we, occupying the position of consumers and buyers, entered into a Convention with those whose interest it was to get the best possible price they could for their produce, and thus stopped the insane competition that existed among them. The interests of the buyer and the seller were totally different. If those responsible for the Sugar Convention had ever attended an Irish horse fair and tried to buy a horse or to sell a horse they would have realised there was all the difference in the world between the buyer and the seller. We entered into this Convention. What was the result? No sooner did the Brussels Convention become law than the price of sugar went down in all producing countries and up in England. The consumption of sugar increased on the continent 54 per cent., while for the first time in England it decreased 3 per cent. The increased consumption on the continent was largely responsible for the increased cost in this country. It was said to have been due to the dry season, and all sorts of figures were brought foward to indicate that nothing connected with the Brussels Convention was responsible for it. It was nothing of the sort. Without the Brussels Convention there would possibly have been a rise of 9d. or 1s. a cwt. The great advance that took place would never have taken place at all but for the impetus given to Germany, Austria, and France, when the consumption in France went up nearly 100 per cent. There could only be one result of such a state of things. Figures had been given to him that day by some interested society showing that sugar to-day was at the average price at which it had stood for the last ten years. Yet it was said to be a record crop. Did anybody ever hear of a record crop that did not bring down prices? Here was this society, speaking in the interest of this absurd Convention, declaring that while the production of sugar was greater than it had ever been in the history of that commodity the price only came down to the average price of the last ten years. He said unhesitatingly—and he did not speak without knowledge—that if to-day there had been no Brussels Convention the price of sugar, instead of being 8s. 4½d. per cwt. would be about 5s. 6d. or 5s. 9d. He did not want to give the House exaggerated figures, but a great authority had stated that in sugar-using industries 50,000 persons had been working half time through the action of this Convention, whilst 12,000 had been added to the number of the unemployed. He would give the House one incident to show how serious was the effect of this Convention on the trade and on the manufactures of this country. Let the House take a busy man who saw some fifty or sixty travellers in the course of a morning. He probably wanted to see thirty or forty, because he had orders for them, and twenty or thirty he desired to dismiss as easily, nicely, and as courteously as he could, but he did not wish to see their samples. Among those travellers there had been in times past travellers from Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and other foreign countries, who had not found an opening to any extent. Directly this Convention came into operation they came and said—

> "Now we can show you something. It is not a question of artistic taste. We can show you a cheaper article than you can buy from your own people."

They could point out that their sweets were made from bounty-fed sugar, which the people of this country were not allowed to use. Having interested the buyer and obtained an opening and having been given the opportunity of having their goods shown in the stores, what was the result? In one shop alone, where practically no trade was done in foreign confectionery, a trade had grown up in these few years to such an extent that a large percentage of the trade done in that shop was done in those goods. When he took out those statistics before the election he was able to point out that what was being sold over the one counter was responsible for four British workmen being thrown out of employment. He was not experienced in the manufacturing confectionery trade, but he gave those figures to a large manufacturing confectioner. He pointed out the amount of trade that was now done and the demand made for the class of goods, and that gentleman said—

> "Mr. Scott, you are not right. There are six men thrown out of work, if that is the quantity being sold at that store."

In spite of such things as that the country were told that the people responsible for such legislation as this Convention were always considering the interest of the workers. A prominent supporter of the other side, speaking to those interested in the West Indies, pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had been responsible for raising the price of sugar from £6 to £16 a ton. He wondered if the right hon. Gentleman, when he fulfilled his great desire to address the working men of this country on this subject, would make that the text of his address. Nothing in all the legislation of the past could equal the Sugar Convention for the interference with trade and the disaster it had brought about. He would not detain the House at greater length. He had seen since he had been in the House the folly of long speeches such as they heard on Friday last, when an important Bill had not time to be sent to Committee because of the long speeches of its supporters, and he could promise the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite that if he got an opportunity of bringing in a Bill to shorten speeches, no Government Whip would prevent many Members on the Ministerial Benches from following him into the lobby. The Government on this question held, he hoped, the same opinions that they held when in Opposition. He wanted the people of other countries to realise that a new Government had come into office — a Government which was not to be influenced by colonists, nor favoured industries who made no efforts to improve and restore their industries, but relied on Government assistance rather than their own energies, but a strong Government had been returned whose interest was that of the great mass of the consumers of this country. He begged to move.

*MR. IDRIS (Flint Boroughs) said he wished to second this Resolution, because he thought the House ought to let it be known to all those who were interested at home and abroad that they were opposed to the policy of the Convention and that they intended to terminate it at the earliest opportunity. An American statesman of long experience recently told him that it was an indisputable fact that protection was was always a selfish scheme for the benefit of a few people who intended to make something out of it at the cost of the many and the right hon. the Prime Minister said on February 14th, 1905—

> "The Convention is a microcosm; it is an express image of the policies of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain."

The Sugar Convention was a clear illustration of the objects, the methods, and the results of protection. It was a picture of protection, of preference, and of retaliation—of protection of the planters in the West Indies, and of the sugar refiners in this country; of preference, not to the foreigners who helped to give us cheap sugar, but only to those who would agree to make sugar dearer for the people of this country; and of retaliation in its most effectual form, amounting to absolute prohibition of the importation of sugar into this country from foreign countries that would not obey the dictates of a Commission consisting mainly of foreigners sitting in Brussels, and those foreigners consisting of producers who imposed their will on the consumers of this country. The object of the Convention was to make sugar dear. It was idle to deny that that was the object. It could not be of any possible use to the West Indian planters if it did not effect that object. The complaint of the planters was that sugar was so cheap that they could not produce it profitably at the price. The complaints were mainly those of absentee landlords and planters who could not manage to make their industry pay, and who thought that on that account they had a right to be relieved at the cost of the State, although they knew that there were plenty of poorer people in this country who had a better claim to public relief But this state of mind was far too common amongst the landowners at home as well as abroad. Their claim was listened to; they were subsidised largely, and in July, 1902, the hon. Member for West Birmingham stated, in granting them a ırther £250,000, that it was—

> "to tide over the interval which must elapse ɔefore the Convention signed at Brussels comes into force."

And in a Government despatch to the British delegates at Brussels it was stated—

> "That their (the Government's) main reason for desiring to terminate a system which has tended for the time to cheapen the price of sugar to consumers in the United Kingdom, has been their conviction of its injurious effects on their sugar-producing Colonies in the West Indies."

The right hon. the Leader of the Opposition said on June 26th, 1903—

> "If it were not for the case of the West Indies, there is no conceivable reason why we should not allow the foreigner to tax himself for the benefit of the consumer in this country,"

and on August 6th, 1903, he said—

> "It was true, and the Government did not deny it, that the effect of a foreign bounty must be to benefit the consumers in this country."

The effect of a rise in the price of sugar was fully pointed out a hundred times in this House, and to the Members of this House, by constituents outside. It was clearly shown that not more than one-twentieth to one-thirtieth of the sugar consumed in this country could come from the West Indies, and that for every £20 extra paid by the people of this country for sugar not more than £1 could possibly find its way into the pockets of the West Indian planters. This was exactly what had happened. As to what the hon. Member for West Birmingham expected the rise in price to be as a result of the Convention, they might learn from a speech made by him in the House of Commons on July 1st, 1902, when he said that the disadvantage of the foreign bounty system to the West Indian planter was "at least £5 a ton." It followed that in order to overcome this disadvantage the price of sugar would have to be raised "at least £5 a ton," and this effect of the Convention was for a time more than realised. Sir Alfred Jones claimed that the hon. Member for West Birmingham had been instrumental in raising the price of sugar from £6 to £16 a ton, and this was substantially true at the time the statement was made. During the last two years the people of this country had paid at the very least £10,000,000 more for sugar as a result of the Convention, and as last year only one-twenty-fifth of the sugar consumed in this country came from the West Indies it followed that at least £9,500,000 out of the £10,000,000 went into the pockets of the European producers. It seemed clear, therefore, that the authors of this Convention were the friends of every country but their own. They had impoverished our land, and increased unemployment. He could vouch for the fact that in the industry with which he was connected thousands have been thrown out of work and some were now walking about starving, partly no doubt as a result of the sugar tax, but still largely as a result of the Convention. The authors of this Convention had depleted the scanty board of the very poor of our land for the enrichment of the foreigner. They had heard a good deal lately in this House of the posters used in the recent election, but leaflets were issued containing far more distinct perversions of fact than could be conveyed by means of any pictorial poster. He had one issued by the Conservative Publication Department headed "The Sugar Convention" and in large print, "The Hollowness of the Radical Agitation," "Sugar is cheaper than before the Convention." The Convention was signed on March 5th, 1902, and it was ratified on August 6th, 1903. When it was signed the price of 88 per cent. beet sugar, free on board at Hamburg, was 6s. 4½d. per cwt., and the price of the same sugar at the same place at the time of the ratification by Parliament was 8s. 6d. per

Mr. Idris.

cwt. And although the price had gone considerably higher and been lowered again, this increased price of about 2s. per cwt. was maintained now. This increased price of 2s. per cwt. meant a continued and present loss of £3,000,000 a year to the people of this country as a result of the Convention. The price of sugar was steadily going down before the Convention, and it is fully believed by the best judges that if the Convention had not been signed, the price of raw sugar would have gone down below 6s., and would have remained about that figure.

> "The Unionist Government entered into the Brussels Sugar Convention in 1902. In 1903 and 1904 the price of sugar rose owing to the shortage in supply caused by drought."

The drought was so slight that the amount of shortage caused by it was counterbalanced by the larger crop of cane sugar. In France, where this drought was said to have occurred, the price of sugar was lowered as a consequence of the Convention, whilst at the same time the price of sugar in this country was increased in consequence of the Convention. The shortage was caused mainly by the increased consumption in France, as a result of cheaper sugar in that country. The retail prices per lb. of sugar previous to the Convention were:—England, 1½d.; Germany, 3⅝d.; France, 4¾d.; Belgium, 3¾d.; and on March 1st this year, after making allowance for the sugar tax in England, the prices were:—England, 1¾d; Germany, 2½d.; France, 3d.; and Belgium, 2½d. These figures showed that while the retail price of sugar in England was now ¼d. per lb. higher, the price had fallen in Germany 1⅛d.; in France, 1¾d.; and in Belgium, 1¼d. This increased consumption in France, amounting to no less than 54 per cent., had enabled speculators in France to corner sugar in a way which otherwise they would not have been able to do. There had been in Paris sugar kings, sugar queens, and sugar suicides. The Conservative pamphlet said—

> "The Radical Party at once fastened upon the rise in price, coupled it with the Sugar Convention (with which it had no connection), and started an agitation against the Government on the ground that its action had given the country dear sugar."

It was dear sugar that the planters wanted, it was dear sugar that the Government wanted to give them, it was dear sugar that the Convention succeeded in causing. In trying to understand why an apparently sane Government committed this folly they were driven to one or two conclusions. Either they were so stupid as to be incapable of appreciating the fact that as only a small fraction of the sugar consumed in this country could come from the West Indies, only a small fraction of the increased amount we should pay for it in this country could possibly go into the pockets of the West Indian planters, or they were so selfish and reckless as to be utterly regardless of how much our people put in the pockets of foreigners, if only a small fraction of the amount found its way into the pockets of their friends. He had read in ancient literature that whom the gods wished to destroy they first made mad. The madness of the authors of this Convention was evident; their political destruction was equally clear. It was the duty of those who opposed the policy of the late Government to declare to everybody concerned that they did not intend to continue this madness.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to withdraw from the Sugar Convention."—(*Mr. Alfred Scott.*)

*Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he could lay claim to a certain knowledge of this subject. He had been in the majority of the sugar-producing countries of the world, and had been personally connected more especially with the sugar industry in the West Indies. He had listened with the greatest attention, and he admitted with some disappointment, to the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Resolution, because he anticipated, having regard to the present state of the sugar market, that the House would hear some new development in the argument, but the hon. Members had only given a *rechauffé* of the old arguments which had done duty on many a previous occasion. The only variation which had been introduced was that both hon. Members insisted with the utmost vehemence that it was to the wicked

Sugar Convention that the rise in price during last year was due. He would only put this question to the hon. Members—if the Sugar Convention caused the rise in the price what was it that caused the fall? What had occurred in the interim to suspend the operation of the Convention? [An HON. MEMBER: A record production.] Did hon. Members seriously mean to contend that were it not for the Convention the price of sugar, instead of being 8s. 6d., would be 1s? That was a *reductio ad absurdum*, but it was the logical conclusion of the hon. Member's argument. If he were to argue the question on purely Party lines no course would be more simple. He might have come armed with a whole ream of pamphlets, and he might have quoted from *Hansard* previous speeches of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite as to what the course of the sugar market would be. *Hansard* was full of prophecies, but when they came to be considered in the light of events, it would be found that those prophecies had not been borne out. Hon. Members prophesied that there would be a permanently increased cost to consumers in this country. He did not blame them. They were full of the spirit of prophecy and no doubt their prophecies would have gotten them a certain amount of political gain. He did not say that that was the object of their prophesies. That was a purely fortuitous circumstance, but still that unearned increment would have accrued if the general Providence which ordered the affairs of all men had not decreed that there should be a bounteous harvest of beet on the continent, and if the particular Providence which directed the affairs of this House and nation had not decreed that the general election should be postponed until December. He did not want to raise unhappy memories in the minds of hon. Members opposite, but he did want to say that he viewed with a certain amount of astonishment the position of a large number of Members on the other side of the House. He did so because they were never tired of declaring how much reverence they attached to the doctrines of Mr. Cobden. They never seemed to be out of the influence of that great man. Ever since his death Mr. Cobden had exercised a sort of mental fascination over them. [An HON. MEMBER: And so he will.] Yes, but when this question of sugar came up hon. Members stopped their ears and would not listen to the voice of the charmer. He had always understood that Mr. Cobden advocated the exchange of commodities at their natural prices. He was confirmed in that view when he came to look at what Mr. Cboden had to say on the subject. On the subject of natural price Mr. Codben said—

> "We do not seek Free Trade primarily for the purpose of purchasing at a cheaper money rate; we require the natural price of the world's market. Whether it becomes dearer with a Free Trade or whether it becomes cheaper matters not to us, provided the people of this country have it at its natural price."

And yet hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were followers of Mr. Cobden, were quarrelling with those who desired to get a system of procuring commodities at their natural prices, because they said it involved loss and ruin to consumers in general, and in particular to the confectionery and jam industries. He was somewhat of a doubting Thomas in this matter. He was confirmed in his doubt when he referred to the list of dividends paid by various confectionery and jam companies during the past few years. He observed that one company in particular—he admitted that it was exceptional—was paying as the average of the last three years the substantial dividend of over 20 per cent. That was quite satisfactory as things went, but he was told that while that was all very well in the home trade the foreign trade was being ruined and ground to powder by foreign competition. That was discounted when they came to look at the *Chamber of Commerce Journal* for November this year. He found that during

> "the eleven months ended November, 1903, 1904 and 1905, the quantity and value of the exports of confectionery, jams and preserved fruits was higher last year than in any of its predecessors."

The exports were in 1903, 294,886 cwt.; in 1904, 289,841 cwt.; and in 1905, 315,478 cwt. The values were in 1903, £743,718; in 1904, £750,870; and in 1905, £824,221. The same journal said—

> "Moreover, what is more satisfactory still, there was no doubt that there was even greater improvement in the home trade."

In the face of these facts he must say that the remarks as to loss and ruin seemed to be somewhat inaccurate. The hon. Member for Flint had referred to the tremendous increase in the consumption of sugar on the continent as if it were some great wrong inflicted on the industries of this country. He would point out that the hon. Member's figures though correct did not represent consumption. They represented warehousing as well as consumption. When foreign merchants realised that the Convention was coming into effect on 1st September, 1903, they started and sold out until they had nearly cleared their warehouses. It was not for some time afterwards that they commenced to buy in again. In the case of France alone that mistaken proportion was something like 185,000 tons, and if the figures for the whole of the continent were taken it came to about 300,000 tons. After all, this cry of loss and ruin was only the ordinary cry which was always raised in these circumstances. He never knew a 'short' interest yet which did not cry out when the market went up against it. If, as a matter of fact, the sugar industries of this country were suffering from foreign competition, that competition must be either fair or unfair. If it was fair and inflicted injury on British trades it would be the most absolute protection to interfere with the Convention. How such a policy could commend itself to the party which boasted of being the free trade party was a thing that passed his comprehension. If the foreign competition was unfair, by all means protect the home manufacturer. That, however, should not be done by taxing the legitimate producers of the raw material, but by taxing those who produced the foreign manufactured article under unfair conditions of competition. He would now say a word as to what the Convention had done. He confessed quite frankly that he did not think that what had been done by the Sugar Convention could not have been done equally well and just as effectively by countervailing duties.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear.

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMPSON said that as a matter of fact the Convention was a concession to free trade prejudices. It was a free trade device, and if there was anything wrong with the machinery of the device all he could say was that he should have infinitely preferred the device of countervailing duties. But the Convention had broadened and was continuing to broaden the area of sugar-production, and in doing that it was providing the best guarantee against such fluctuations as had occurred in the past. It was impossible for the Convention to prevent fluctuations altogether. There would always be fluctuations according as the crop was lean or fat. If a device of this sort broadened the sources from which supplies were drawn it minimised the risk of the failure of the crop in all of them simultaneously. Beet supplies were drawn from a comparatively limited area, and the House could imagine what would be the result of a disastrous drought in that area. There was a drought which caused a deficiency of 19 per cent., or over a 1,000,000 tons. He believed that the effect on the market of that drought would have been greatly increased if, in the absence of any such instrument as the Convention, they had been rendered still more dependent for sugar than they were at the present moment on the beet supplies of the continent. Cane supplies were drawn from almost every tropical country in the world, and the risk of a simultaneous drought affecting those supplies was a risk hardly worth taking into their calculations. It ought to be a source of satisfaction and pleasure to hon. Gentlemen opposite that cane sugar was ousting beet sugar from the markets of the world in the way it had done during the past few years. Hon. Members would remember that for a long series of years there was a gradual building up of the beet sugar industry, until the production of beet sugar far outstripped the production of cane sugar, but there was now an approximation to equality in the production of continental beet and cane. In the three years from 1899–1900 to 1901–1902, the average quantity of continental beet produced was 6,076,813 tons, and the cane produced averaged 3,511,213 tons; in the years 1902–1903 to 1905–1906, continental beet amounted to 5,862,946, and cane 4,800,000; and for 1906–1907 the estimated amount of continental beet was 5,650,000, and of cane 5,500,000. He thought these figures proved conclusively that a change was taking place in the world's supply of cane and beet sugar. He believed that change would continue, and that there would be a sugar supply which would be more independent than it was at the present moment of the fluctuations due to weather causes. He did not say that the present price was the natural price. He did not know any factory in France which could produce beet sugar on a large commercial scale under 9s., and few in Germany could produce much under 8s. 6d. to 8s. 9d. In many the present price did not meet the cost of production. That was borne out by a petition which was presented at the beginning of this month to the Reichstag. The petitioners said—

> "The situation of the German export trade is rendered more serious than ever by the growing competition of cane sugar, the fall in market prices to a point actually below the cost of production places it in a situation of great peril."

It should be remembered that the beet sugar industry had had every advantage which science could expend on its development, and at the present moment the last ounce was got out of the beet. The same was not true in regard to cane sugar. Cane sugar had not yet come into its own, and yet it was produced in some parts of the world at prices with which beet sugar could not compete for a moment. It was produced in Peru at something like £6. That was due to the fact that there was irrigation there. Java was often held up as an example for cane growers. The production there was in the neighbourhood of £7. They had cheap labour there—coolies who lived in compounds, and who, he had no doubt, got beaten when they deserved it. They were often told that the West Indies were behindhand and were not benefiting by the present Convention. On the contrary, he maintained that the West Indies had derived genuine benefit from the removal of the continual uncertainty which formerly existed. Now there was security for the investment of capital, and the cost of production was being lowered by leaps and bounds. Time and capital were, however, required for this purpose. When land had gone out of cultivation, at least an interval of three years and a great expenditure were necessary before a crop could be obtained. There was a great deal of talk about antiquated machinery. Machinery was the smallest part of the matter. It could be provided in a year or six months if the conditions were secure and capital could be attracted. He felt that many hon. Gentlemen opposite who had, perhaps, made up their minds on this matter, had done so without apprehending the true state of things. The continuance of the Convention, or some such device, meant a continuance of security, and that meant cheap sugar to the consumer, less violent fluctuation, and a fair profit to the producer. He would add a plea for justice to the West Indies. Hon. Members opposite might say that this was special pleading. That might be so, but think of the circumstances! In the West Indies they were dealing with three distinct classes of people—the white population, the coolies, and the negroes. In regard to the white population, he submitted that this country was bound, if not by legal, by the highest moral obligations to realise that it owed them a large amount of consideration and a certain amount of justice in view of their passionate and intense loyalty, and the extent to which that loyalty had been tried. For two successive periods the people of this country had been taxing the West Indies in order to get cheap sugar here, by allowing bounties, and by failing to continue the differential duty on sugar produced by slave labour. The West Indian producers bore that without complaining, it was true, but always in the hope that the old country would do something to help them. In the meantime these West Indian sugar planters could not have gone on without the assistance of America. But with the abolition of the bounties that support from America ceased. Consideration was also due to the coolie population on much the same grounds. These coolies had been imported to further the sugar industry, and if that industry which was, for many, the sole means of their livelihood were taken away, large numbers of them would have to be repatriated. Then there was the third class, the negro population. It must be remembered that they were not an indigenous population. They were brought to the West Indies with the connivance and by the authority of the British Government, under the abominable and horrible system of slavery. When the people of this country abolished that system, they could not rid themselves of the obligation laid upon them to continue to do something for the negroes. He appealed to hon. Members opposite and to the Government to entreat the hon. Member for Ashton not to push his Motion forward at the present moment, and not to place a definite bar against the prosperity and the future hopes of the West Indian Islands.

MR. PAUL (Northampton) said he was sure that if this debate required any justification, besides its intrinsic importance, it was to be found in the speech of the hon. Member for North West Lanarkshire. It was a pleasure to listen to such a speech and an honour to argue with a Gentleman animated by the fervour of conviction. The hon. Member had assumed that, because there were other factors which affected price besides taxes, therefore, taxes did not affect price at all. He asked the wife of a working man in his constituency whether the price of sugar had gone up since the autumn of 1903—the date at which the Convention came into force; and she asked him if he took her for a fool. She might have asked him, indeed, a much more disagreeable question. The hon. Member had quoted Mr. Cobden as saying that everything ought to be sold at its natural price. Mr. Cobden was so much of an internationalist that he desired the prosperity of all other countries equally with his own; but he would ask the hon. Member whether Mr. Cobden had ever suggested such a Convention as that under discussion, or countervailing duties which the hon. Gentleman said he would prefer. Mr. Cobden's opinions should be taken as a whole, and not one or two isolated sayings. It was very difficult to make any man who was not either a student of economic science or a practical man of business understand why free trade gave us an advantage over protectionist countries in neutral markets; but there was one glaring example which anybody with eyes in his head could see, and that was the effect on this country of the bounties given by foreign countries on the exports of their sugar. About 1890 a Sugar Convention Bill was introduced by an Austrian nobleman who represented the Board of Trade—the late Baron de Worms. That Bill was defeated by Lord Farrer, of whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London had once said he did not think much as an economic authority. It was possible that the reputation of Lord Farrer would survive that *obiter dictum.* At that time he was a Member of neither House of Parliament, but, as Sir Thomas Farrer, by letters addressed to the working classes through the Liberal Press he made it impossible for the Government to go on with that Bill. The policy of the Bill was revived a very few years ago. The Tariff Reform League or Gentlemen who held the same opinions, were determined, if he might borrow a phrase from their somewhat limited vocabulary, that they would not any longer "take it lying down"—they would not allow the brutal foreigner to perpetrate the dastardly outrage of flooding our markets with cheap sugar. They concocted this precious Convention. The result had been to turn many a man out of work, as the hon. Member for Ashton had stated, and to send up the price of sugar. It had been, no doubt, a great advantage to the countries which gave bounties. The people of Germany and Austria were getting a little restive. They did not like being taxed for our benefit, and His Majesty's late advisers, true Imperialists, the friends of every country but their own, got France and Germany out of a very awkward strait at the expense of the people of this country. They talked lightly in this House about the price of sugar; they did not feel it. What did the Tariff Reform League care about the price of sugar? The price of champagne or motor cars affected them more. This was a mean and a cruel Convention, because it pressed hardest on the industrial classes of the community and with real and crushing severity on the poorest of the poor, and he hoped that some authoritative spokesman of the Government would announce that as soon as possible this Convention would be denounced—a Convention which put us in a humiliating position at the mercy of envious foreigners, which laid a burden on that part of the community which could afford it least, and which made this country, which in most other respects was the envy of surrounding nations, the contempt and the laughing stock of the world.

Mr. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) said he must say something on one part of this subject to which he had given much attention—that was the question of our Imperial position and our responsibilities for the weaker part of our fellow-citizens in the West Indian colonies. We would not be worthy of our position if we did not try to defend them when they had been suffering from a system which was not fair trade. He did not envy the feelings of any man whose spirit did not rise to the support of those fellow-citizens who had toiled in vain for many long years hoping for the support of the mother country.

*Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) said that in moving the Amendment which stood in his name he did not disagree, but rather agreed, with the views of the mover and seconder of the Resolution. He did not in any way withdraw from the position he took up last year when he seconded an Amendment to the Address in regard to this question; but he did not think that this was an appropriate moment to pass the particularly drastic Resolution moved by the hon. Member for Ashton. The view he held last year had been strengthened by everything which had taken place since with regard to the Sugar Convention. The desire of the promoters of the movement which resulted in the Sugar Convention was to help the sugar refiners and the cane sugar growers in the West Indies. The result had been merely to give large facilities to the producers and capitalists in a group of foreign countries at the expense of the consumers of this country. There was a peculiar irony in the fact that those hon. Gentlemen who for the last two years had been proclaiming loudly from protectionist platforms that certain countries were damaging us in the markets of the world should by their Convention have given the greatest possible help to that group of foreign countries. Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, and Holland had all largely benefited by the Convention, increasing their consumption by 50 per cent. Germany was the greatest gainer with an increased consumption of 400,000 tons at a lower price than ourselves, whose consumption had been decreased by 300,000 tons, while we paid something like £5,000,000 more for our decreased consumption. Here was an opportunity for the right hon. Member for West Birmingham to use his retaliation plan and get a *quid pro quo;* but our consumers had lost all down the line. The effect in the West Indies had been to increase the export of cane sugar to this country to a comparatively small extent, while their trade with the United States had had to face competition from other countries formerly debarred from sending sugar to the United States. If we had now a protectionist majority, a scheme of preference and protection would be unfolded; but a singular feature in one article of the Convention was that a colony coming under it was not to enjoy any preference from this country, so that the one country debarred from such a scheme would be the West Indies. He moved the Amendment because the time was inopportune for passing such a Resolution. It could have no effect, because this country was chained to this "blessed" Convention until September, 1908, and a year's notice would be necessary. He hoped the Amendment would be accepted or the Resolution withdrawn. Our representative would then attend the next meeting of the Convention Powers untrammelled by a Resolution that could have no effect. He begged to move.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) seconded the Amendment. However strongly they might feel that the Convention was an evil thing for this country, they were all able to see that a decision on the question of its denouncement could not be come to for eighteen months.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'inasmuch as the Brussels Convention is binding on the contracting Powers for a period of five years, and that any notice on behalf of a contracting State to withdraw is subject to twelve months' notice, to be given in September 1907, it is inexpedient for this House to announce any decision at this moment.'—(*Sir John Dickson-Poynder.*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.): After the admirable speech delivered from this side of the House by the hon. Member for North West Lanarkshire—a speech which, I think, emphasises the great advantage which any Member has who speaks from knowledge at first hand and not from mere theories—I should not have risen were it not for the extraordinary attitude adopted by the Government. We have been discussing a substantive Motion for an hour and a half and no Member of the Government has risen to give any guidance to the House as to the view we should take of it. I can only infer that they intend either to advise the House to accept the policy embodied in the Amendment just moved, or to advise the hon. Member who moved the original Resolution to withdraw it. To neither of these courses can we offer any strong objection. But the Government will be placed in the same humiliating and absurd position which they have occupied in regard to Chinese labour. Their endeavour to reconcile their present policy with election pledges and platform speeches reminds me of nothing so much as a host attempting an air of hilarity while aware that his guests are suffering from an acute attack of indigestion. A few months ago the Home Secretary declared that as soon as the Government came into office this insane Convention would be denounced; but the other day the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in answer to a Question put by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, said that no decision taken before September, 1907, could be effective and the matter had not yet been considered. The truth is, that the agitation against the Sugar Convention having served its immediate purpose, the Government are becoming conscious of the fact that the case against the Convention is a very thin one. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] The arguments against the Convention have been practically reduced to two. There is, first, the argument that by adhering to this Convention we have tied our hands and made it possible for a majority of foreign representatives to decide British policy in regard to an article of general consumption. From the point of view of mere abstract theory I admit that is a plausible argument, though in so far as it is a valid argument against the Brussels Sugar Convention it is equally valid against the Berlin Act and the Brussels Act, by which we bound ourselves not to impose import duties in excess of a specified limit on goods coming into British colonies. But what we have to consider is not a question of theory, but of practice. Has the fact that we have made ourselves a party to this Convention led to any practical inconvenience, or is it likely to cause any serious embarrassment in the future? I have heard nothing in this debate to justify an affirmative answer to either of those questions. We have always the right of appeal, a right which we have successfully exercised hitherto, in cases where the decisions of the Commission seemed to us to be based on insufficient grounds—and in the last resort we always have it in our power to denounce the Convention. With regard to the confectionery trade, the two principal States, practically the only two of importance, which export confectionery to this market are Switzerland and the United States. The latter use for confectionery nothing but by-products of sugar which are not affected by the provisions of the Convention, and Switzerland, while it imports sugar which has already paid duty, never grants a refund of that duty on exports. Therefore there is no reason why the confectionery makers in this country should be injured. [AN HON. MEMBER on the Ministerial benches: They are.] If they can prove injury the Commission has declared its readiness to take up the matter. But even if the Commission declined to do so we still have it in our power to take independent action, and as long as the late Government remained in office the Convention could not have caused them any embarrassment, whatever embarrassment it may occasion to a Government which has pledged itself, most unwisely, against the policy of retaliation or prohibition under any conceivable circumstances. I will not deal with the argument that the Convention is an invasion of the principles of free trade, which has been denied by the Prime Minister himself in a speech in this

House on June 15, 1899.† The second and real argument against the Convention, such as it is, is not an economical argument at all, but a social argument drawn from expediency alone, the argument that the Convention tends to raise the price of an article of almost universal consumption among the great masses of the working classes. Even supposing that the Convention has been responsible for the rise in price, it by no means follows that if we denounced the Convention we would necessarily secure the restoration of bounties and a reduction in price. If the working classes are paying too much in respect of their sugar the proper course is, not to denounce the Convention, but to reduce the sugar duty. And what is the obstacle to doing so ?—the fact that the Government has not only pledged itself to a large additional expenditure on every kind of project, but have also debarred themselves from any comprehensive scheme for broadening the basis of taxation. They have pledged themselves to maintain, in all its unbending rigidity, a fiscal system which prevents them from raising any substantial amount of indirect taxation except from the one or two articles which are practically necessaries of life. I do not wish to deny for one moment that the Convention may, to a certain extent, have been responsible for some of the increase in price that has occurred in the past. But I do say that the effect of the Convention in raising prices has been, and could only have been, infinitesimal. That is proved by the fact that the lowest price was touched after the Convention came into operation, and that, at the present moment, the price is at least 1s. below the average price of the ten years before the Convention was signed. I agree that you can prove almost anything by figures, but it is no more absurd to attribute the present fall exclusively to the Convention, than it is to attribute the rise in price to the same cause. The truth is that there have been many causes which led to the rise. The chief one was the shortage which occurred on the Continent, which amounted to considerably over a million tons on the normal output. It was also due partly to the increased consumption on the Continent consequent on the abolition of the bounties, which must lead to increased supply, and an eventual cheapening of price, and partly to the diminution of the area of beet cultivation, which showed how precarious was the basis on which such cultivation had rested. I will not allude to the causes of the subsequent fall more than to say that it was due partly to the passing away of the effects of the temporary shortage, partly to the release of invisible stocks, but also, to a very substantial extent, to the great increase in the growth and importation of cane sugar from the British West Indies. Precisely the same effect as regards cane cultivation is following on the present Sugar Convention that followed upon the imposition of retaliatory duties in India. But, assuming that the argument of the hon. Member is true that the Convention is responsible for the entire increase in the price of sugar in this country, is that a conclusive argument against the Convention ? I think not. Pushed to its logical conclusion, that argument means that the interests of the consumer are the only interests we have to consider and that, provided the consumer gets his sugar cheap, it does not matter what loss or ruin is inflicted either on the manufacturers at home or on the sugar producers in our Colonies. Is that a possible position for those to take up who support the Excise duties on cotton imports into India ? No one pretends that we enforce the Excise duties on Lancashire goods going into India in the interests of the Indian consumer. We enforce them in the interests of the Lancashire employee. We support a policy of protection here because it happens to benefit the British consumer, and a policy of free trade in India, although it hurts the Indian consumer, because it benefits our producer. But it is unnecessary to argue the case as between the consumer and the producer. The consumer himself gains by the Convention, for a cheapness dependent on the bounty system is artificial and uncertain and must have been temporary. If my interpretation of the policy of the Government is correct, whilst I will vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wiltshire, I consider that the position of the Government will be an unsatisfactory and an undignified one. If their intentions are to be held indefinitely in suspense, the effect will probably be to paralyse the enterprise of the sugar planters in our own Colonies and gravely to abridge our power of influencing the decisions at Brussels. I am afraid that such a course is likely to make foreign countries think that whatever other departments are efficient in this country, neither the Board of Trade nor the Foreign Office have a thinking department at all. I hope we shall not have to wait very many months before the Government has arrived at some settled convictions on so important a branch of our fiscal policy.

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† See (4) *Debates*, lxxii., 1307 *et seq.*

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The speech to which we have just listened is one we are accustomed to from those Benches. Gentlemen on those Benches, having got their country into difficulties in all parts of the world, and having left us to extricate them, in a way which is consistent with the obligations they have entered into, make those difficulties greater by taunts and jeers and by endeavouring to induce us to take a course which they in their own hearts know to be absolutely wrong. The noble Lord who has just spoken said he regarded the appeal for the withdrawal of the Resolution as a sensible course, and at the same time he said it was an undignified course.

*LORD PERCY: I said it was undignified in view of your past pledges.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is not part of our past pledges to break a treaty, and that is the question at the present moment. I wish the noble Lord had read the Resolution before he made his speech. It is a Resolution calling on us to denounce a treaty from which we cannot withdraw for some time. If he wants to argue the merits of the Sugar Convention, that is a totally different proposition which is not before the House. A member of the late Government is the last man in this House who should have the coolness, the audacity, to taunt us about efficiency and thinking matters out. The noble Lord said we had not considered what we were going to do. We never said we had not considered the merits of the Convention. The only thing my right hon. friend said he had not considered was the question of withdrawal. Why? Because that is a question you need not consider till next year. A member of a Government that took action without ever considering taunts us because we have not considered eighteen months in advance a thing which we need not consider till next year. The proposition before the House is perfectly clear. Is it desirable at the present moment to announce a decision which we could not possibly carry out until next September twelve months? In the meantime our delegates would be embarrassed at Brussels when dealing with very important questions. I say it is the duty of those who landed us in this mess to assist us to make the best of the circumstances until we can consider what has to be done. With regard to the merits of the question, the noble Lord's figures were absolutely wrong. The noble Lord seemed to think that this Convention had steadied prices. He really could not have studied the volume of prices during the last two or three years since the Convention and compared it with previous prices. As a matter of fact, it was very steady before the Convention. ["Oh!"] I will give him a few figures. Take the year before the Convention. The figures are 6s. 5d. in January, then it remained at 6s. and then came down to 5s. 9d. in July. There is not much fluctuation there.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is monthly.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman is not accustomed to have his figures minutely examined. He considers it a ludicrous precaution. In the following year the prices ranged somewhere around 7s. and 8s.—a fluctuation of 1s. or 2s. What was the fluctuation immediately after the Convention? It was a fluctuation which ran up from 8s. until in January you landed in 16s. Now, that is what I call a fluctuation; it is the highest figure we have had for ten years. Yet the noble Lord says the fluctuations since the Convention have been infinitesimal. I do not think any one who pays 8s. per cwt. more for sugar would regard that as "infinitesimal"

It is just doubling the price in the course of a few months. Who was it spoke about prophecies? The prophecies were, "No more fluctuations." We were to have a fixed—a scientific tariff. What has happened? In 1901 the crop of the world was over 10,000,000. Our price went down to 5s. 9d. The fluctuations then undoubtedly depended on the crop. We have had fluctuations in crops since, and it is true that when we have shortage the price goes up to 16s. Yet when we have a good crop of 11,000,700 our price is 8s. 6d. We do not get the benefit of good harvests. We do not get the benefit of natural price. We are excluding all the produce of a country like Russia—something like 1,000,000 tons a year. And yet these gentlemen who have got us into this pickle want to taunt us into the position of going to this Convention in May by first of all announcing that the Convention should be denounced. That is their notion of diplomacy. That comes from the noble Lord who used to represent the Foreign Office. The other prophecy was that the Convention was going to restore the West Indies—to transform a wilderness into a paradise. What has happened there? The noble Lord quoted figures to show that we were now paying bigger sums to the West Indies. Of course we are. If you enter into a convention to run up prices you naturally pay bigger prices to somebody. That is the policy of retaliation and fiscal reform, which has been so much belauded. In 1901–2, the year before the Convention, we got 62,000 tons from the West Indies, for which we paid £736,000. Last year we were to get a bigger production from the West Indies, for this Convention was in the interests of the West Indies, and to increase their cane production. Well, now, what has happened? We have had two years of a Sugar Convention which was to regenerate the West Indies. The export to this country has gone down from 62,000 tons to 55,000 tons. But here come the figures of the noble Lord. The figures of the cost have gone up from £736,000 to nearly £900,000. We are paying more by nearly £200,000 for 7,000 tons less. This is the great policy which was to regenerate the West Indies and give cheap, certain sugar without fluctuations. I heard the noble Lord ask for the total figures of production. Those are very interesting. We heard a good deal about cane and beet sugar, and we have been told of one result in a very able speech, if I may say so, by the hon. Member for Lanarkshire. We were told that one result of the Convention would be that beet sugar would go down and cane production would go up. But they did not tell us that cane production was going up steadily before the Convention, and there has not been the slightest change in the ratio and increase since. One reason why the cane production had gone down previously was the devastating war in Cuba. But since then Cuba has been gradually developing. The same thing applies to the Philippines, and Java also has been increasing its supply. But take the British West Indies. In the year before the Convention the total production of cane sugar in all our possessions in the West Indies was 253,000 tons. In 1905–6, it went down to 228,000 tons. That is the result of the Sugar Convention on the West Indies. Cane sugar has increased throughout the world except in the West Indies. Exactly; this Government, which wants to protect the British consumer and the Colonies, brings in its first great scheme of fiscal reform, which benefits every foreigner in Europe, benefits every colonial possession except our own, and actually reduces the production of our Colonies by 20,000 tons. What a great scheme of fiscal reform that is. Now let us see about beet sugar. We heard that beet had gone down. Beet has not gone down. It is true that for a year or two it went down. In 1903, which was the year of the Convention, the beet production of the world was 5,500,000, roughly speaking. Last year it was 6,800,000. Now, that is not going down, at least according to the usual methods of computation. That is going up by 1,300,000. But the worst of it is that while cane production is growing in every colony except ours, and beet production is growing enormously, we are not getting the full advantage of it. Why is that? We are told that the Convention did not interfere. What did interfere? [AN HON. MEMBER: The war.] Well, that has done a lot of mischief I know, but it did not interfere in this particular instance. The Convention must have had the effect of arresting the decline in the price of sugar which had been going on steadily. Let any one examine the figures. In the last few years sugar was steadily going down. That was the tendency. It might be 9s., and the next year 10s., but the following year it would drop to 6s. That is not the case at the present moment. You run up to 16s.; you go down, it is true, to 8s. 9d.; but you do not go down to the old figures of 5s. 9d. and 6s., which you reached before the Convention. I would not have gone into these questions had it not been for the challenege put to me by the noble Lord. But the point before the House is a different one. The question is whether it is desirable at the present moment to announce our intentions with regard to the Convention—intentions which one cannot possibly carry out for two years and a half. It would undoubtedly embarrass our representatives at the Conference, and I would appeal to my hon. friends who moved and seconded the Motion to be content with having called attention to the subject. I think it is a very good thing to call attention to the subject. I do not deprecate it for the moment. My hon. friends can see from the mere uneasiness which it has created on the other side that they do not want to be reminded of these prophecies of prosperity in the West Indies, of "no more fluctuations," and of a decrease in the price of sugar. But I would ask my hon. friend not to embarrass our delegates who must go to the conference in May by forcing any premature announcement when no effect can possibly be given to it until September next year.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think the President of the Board of Trade has made a mistake, as he often does, in exaggerating his case, and using superlatives where they are quite unnecessary and often inaccurate. He has a way of getting a temporary success in what we may call the dialectics of Parliament by putting the case of his opponents with the greatest possible unfairness by exaggerating anything that his opponents have said, and then answering the artificial case that he has set up for the purpose. After all, I looked upon this Motion as one very properly put down on behalf of those who during the election had seriously held and had frequently represented that the Convention was a most injurious agreement for the British people, and also that it was an example of what might be expected from fiscal reform. Yes, that is very good; and at all events it is a conceivable argument, and one to which those who differ are bound to oppose a serious answer. But will any one say that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was a serious answer—that it either put the case seriously or the answer seriously? What the right hon. Gentleman did was to go into the most essentially controversial and polemical statement of the case and then to introduce a certain number of figures than which nothing more unfair has ever been put before the House of Commons. Let me say that I have been attacked and sneered at for saying openly—for I do state most things that I believe pretty candidly—that figures alone are very dangerous arguments. That is true, and I am perfectly ready to admit that, while I recognise the grotesque unfairness of the figures, which the right hon. Gentleman has produced, it is perfectly open for other people to say that the figures which I have produced in regard to this or other matters have also been selected for the purpose. I hope it has not been the case either with the right hon. Gentleman or with myself.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Where are my figures unfair?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Wait a minute and I will show you. I claim for myself what I yield to the right hon Gentleman—that by mistake, quite as much as by deliberate purpose, figures may be chosen which are unfair for the purposes of comparison. One thing at all events is clear — that when you pretend, as the right hon. Gentleman does, to draw important conclusions from figures, you must not take a short period. And when he tells us of the fluctuations since the Convention, month by month, I say it is an absurd and grotesque comparison; and the proof of it is that if I were to take for my purpose, as the right hon. Gentleman has done for his, the fluctuations in one year alone I could show that in 1889 those fluctuations had been something between 12s 6d. and 27s. 6d. That is before the Convention, and since the Convention there has been nothing like it. Again the right hon. Gentleman chose to give the House a comparison between the price of sugar in a year of drought and the price in subsequent years, and even in years of plenty. That is not a fair comparison. If you are to compare any individual trade or the whole trade of the country you must take long periods. It is the safest thing to do, or at least you must compare a year of plenty with a year of plenty, and a year of famine with a year of famine.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is what I did.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is what the right hon. Gentleman did not do.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE: I beg your pardon. I did actually give two years of plenty. I gave one year when the production was 10,000,000 and the price 5s. 9d., and I gave last year, when the production was 11,000,000 and the price 8s. 9d.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I entirely disagree with the right hon. Gentleman; and I do not think that he will find many statisticians engaged in this subject who would confirm his views of the figures. But I ask the House to go back to the Resolution of the hon. Member who introduced this Motion. I hope that the decision will not be affected by purely Party considerations, but I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman who was so anxious in his reply to attack his predecessor and actually had the pretension to state that we had left the country in a mess—in a tremendous complication of difficulties, and in a great mess from which the President of the Board of Trade alone can extricate it, will appear to most of us to have advanced a contention which was absolutely ridiculous. I can understand hon. Members opposite differing from our domestic policy. They may think that in this respect we have been wrong and that they can improve upon it. We wish them the greatest possible success, but what they say now with regard to our relations with other countries is absolutely inconsistent with their earlier declarations. From the beginning they declared that they were not prepared to alter the foreign part of our policy in anyway. It is too monstrous now in the course of a debate to bring up as though it were a contestable subject a question decided by their own confession. They were in no difficulty with regard to the Sugar Convention. Do hon. Members think that the Convention is as bad as the right hon. Gentleman pretends? I do not believe it. If they do, they are absolutely inconsistent, for if it is as bad as they pretend, what objection can they have to the Resolution of the hon. Member? The Resolution is not likely to have much effect either way, but honest expressions of opinion from the Benches opposite have always been found to be indiscreet by the Government. They are perfectly willing to support these too indiscreet and too candid expressions of opinion as long as they have no responsibility, but now that they are in office those expressions of opinion are extremely inconvenient. They are trying to ride two horses at once, but the attempt will not satisfy their extreme friends below the gangway, and at the same time hinder them from the effects of committing themselves to the indiscreet promises they have made. They please nobody, for they take the worst course of giving a sense of insecurity to everyone who is interested in the maintenance of this Convention, whether it be the workpeople employed in the Colonies or in this country, or the people who have to find the capital in order that this industry may be carried on. Do you consider that it is not a good thing to maintain the position of insecurity in these matters? If you desire to restore the bounty, why do you not say so plainly? A state of things like the present cannot but be mischievous in a grave degree, but it would still be better than a perpetual threat on the one hand and a refusal to declare your policy on the other hand. After all, I thought that we were to have a serious discussion on the merits of the Convention, and not a purely Party attack from the right hon. Gentleman. What is the complaint of the Convention? Would not the House think from the statements made, uncorrected by the President of the Board of Trade, to a certain extent supported by him by his selection of particular figures, that the country had almost been ruined, and that a tax of an enormous amount had been put on the poor? We all know those ridiculous exaggerations which were current during the election, according to which this country had paid £10,000,000 a year for the benefit of somebody else. To all that kind of grotesque and ignorant exaggeration I give the flattest possible contradiction. There has been no such loss on the part of this country, and there has been no benefit to other countries in consequence of the Convention. Anyone would think who heard the speech of the hon. Member for Ashton that we had lost money, and that it had inured to the profit of some other country. Nothing can be further from the truth. [" Oh! "] In the first place, they have not lost at all, not one penny, by the Convention, and, in my opinion, we have greatly gained. We have not lost, because the price of sugar has not been raised. The average price of sugar taken over a period of years has been no higher after than before the Convention. I say we have gained, because we have secured an additional supply. We have brought into the market an additional production of cane sugar, and consequently we have done what everybody knows will tend to equalise the price in future, and will render such fluctuations as have been experienced in the past less frequent and less serious. That foreign countries have to some extent reduced the duties upon sugar, and thereby led to greater consumption in those countries is made a matter of derision by hon. Members opposite, as though they thought we had a right to complain because other countries now consume more sugar. It is continually made a matter of criticism against foreign countries that, owing to their extravagant financial policy, the consumption of sugar in those countries is very much less than in ours. Their consumption of sugar is now approaching more nearly to ours, and a very good thing it is for those countries, and no harm to us. It is no part of our policy to keep down the consumption of the necessaries of life in foreign countries, and it cannot be considered as a loss to us that their prosperity enables them to consume more of those articles than before. I maintain that the Convention has amply justified itself. We never made any of those extravagant statements attributed to us by the imagination of the President of the Board of Trade. What we said I maintain, and I am perfectly ready to say again; I am not ready to accept the descriptions of my speeches or of my colleagues' by the right hon. Gentleman, who never quotes us exactly or correctly represents the true spirit of our speeches, and thereby does us a great injustice. After all, while I maintain most strenuously that this Convention has been no disadvantage to the people of this country, it is not merely with regard to questions of pecuniary or immediate, or temporary advantage that I ever advocated it or continue to support it. Mr. Gladstone, who was never afraid of the conclusions to which his arguments might lead, made it perfectly clear in discussions that have taken place with reference to foreign bounties that in no circumstances could he regard bounties as beneficial or just, even though they brought some advantages to consumers in this country. Do the new free-traders differ from what Mr. Gladstone and, indeed, Mr. Cobden laid down in regard to bounties? If they do not, then let us look not to the immediate advantages of consumers in this country, but to the question of justice, which affect not merely the consumer but the producer of sugar. My interest in this question has been greatly exaggerated. I mean, that more credit has been given to me than I deserve. But my peculiar interest in the matter was derived from the fact that I was Colonial Secretary at the time the discussions on the sugar bounties arose; and as my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Duchy once said in regard to his post as Indian Secretary, the Colonial Secretary is required to pay particular attention to the interests of the Colonies, and not to forget, at the same time, that he is a British Minister, who has the interests of his own country at heart also. Take the case of the

Colonies. The President of the Board of Trade is not connected, of course, with the Colonial Department. But I would undertake to say that the Under-Secretary to the Colonies, if he studied the question, would find that for the last year or two the condition of the West Indian Colonies has most materially improved. Their plight was one of the great difficulties with which I had to deal when I went to the Colonial Office. The present Foreign Secretary very kindly presided over a Commission which went out to inquire into their condition, and the Commission reported that unless the bounties were done away with the West Indies would become a constant charge upon the mother country. That state of things has disappeared—temporarily, at all events—and, as I believe, entirely as the result of the Convention. Even if we were to accept the view that the Convention has increased the price of sugar—a result which I do not at all believe has followed—would it be anything more than common justice that we had given up illegitimate profits obtained from bounties in order to give fair play to our Colonies? Take the case of the refining industry. Here also there has been improvement. As you give this trade security you may rest assured that, so far from losing employment, there will be a great addition to the employment of the people of this country. The statement has been made that thousands of workmen have been thrown out of employment in the confectionery trades as the result of the Convention. While accepting the sincerity of the hon. Gentleman who made that statement, I say there is no foundation whatever for it. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] All the statistics show that, on the contrary, those trades have, on the whole, greatly increased [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh"] both in amount and in value. But even if it were true that there has been this loss of trade, it would be the loss of a trade that must be artificial so long as it depends on the aid of bounties. As I understand, the Government have asked the movers of the Resolution to withdraw it, and no doubt they will be agreeable to that suggestion. Then the Government propose to support the Amendment. I do not think there is any objection to the Amendment, though there is great objection to the speeches which were made upon it, speeches which will get the Government into more difficulties than the Amendment will get them out of. I cannot compliment the Government upon the position they have adopted of trying, once more unsuccessfully, to avoid responsibility, but I am quite prepared to join with them in supporting the hon. Member for Wiltshire if there is any division.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there is no desire on our part to avoid responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman has taken a somewhat singular course in the last sentences of his speech, for he has indicated what the Government desire the House to do. Perhaps if he had left that to me——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not know you took a different view from the President of the Board of Trade——

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not take a different view in any respect. But the right hon. Gentleman has made a speech of his usual kind. Having created the *impasse* in which the country stands——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There is no *impasse.*

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Having himself more conspicuously, and more really than any other Member of the late Government, been responsible for this policy, having carried it out, and fastened it round the neck of the country, he now comes and taunts us—who opposed that policy to the best of our power, and who have not changed one atom of the opinions we held—with not immediately annulling that policy.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then what does he taunt us with? Does he think that when, a year or two ago, this policy was introduced which we objected to entirely, we should have humbly acquiesced in it? If, on the other hand, we were then doing our duty in expressing the strong opinions we held, why should he throw them at our heads now, when, owing to his arrangements and the international obligations which he has placed upon us, we are unable to act so freely as we should like? That is what the right hon. Gentleman thinks is fair dealing, and also clever tactics. I do not believe it is either the one or the other. What would be gained by our making a public announcement at this moment of our intention ultimately, when the time comes, to denounce the treaty? What would be gained? ["Nothing."] This would be gained, which apparently hon. Members opposite think desirable—that our delegate at the Conference would be hampered and embarrassed at every step, and his power would be weakened in the efforts he makes, not, perhaps, to secure any great advantages for this country, but to see that the disadvantages put upon us are as small as possible. That goes for nothing if the right hon. Gentleman sees his way to a little Parliamentary advantage, a little Party capital—he needs all that he can get. It is not that of which we need be afraid. And when on one of these subjects after another, which are all of the same character—when the right hon. Gentleman and his friends have committed the country in this direction and that direction, and to a policy to which we entirely object, and of which if we were free we should make short work, he asks us prematurely, from the blue sky, with no reason whatever for doing it, to make a public announcement of our policy.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not ask you.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, he thinks we ought to respond to the question. I entirely understand the action taken by my hon. friend and the strong feelings which we expressed, but I think he will see that however useful this debate will have been—and it will have been useful in calling the attention of the country to the position in which we stand—my hon. friend will appreciate the fact that nothing would be gained, in the interests of the country, and with a view to putting an end ultimately to those evils of which he complains, by the adoption of his Motion and therefore I trust that he will withdraw it.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. SCOTT: After the explanation given by the Prime Minister, I beg leave to withdraw my Motion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) took the Chair.

Clause 1.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) said he wanted to know in what order these clauses were going to be taken. He noticed that the first three clauses were similar to what they had been for some years past, but the fourth clause amended Section 44 of the Army Act. There were various other Amendments, and he wished to know how they were going to take these various clauses, because they were not arranged in any consecutive order.

*THE CHAIRMAN: We are taking the Bill as it is, and we are taking it clause by clause.

*COLONEL LEGGE said that his difficulty was that they did not correspond with the sections of the Army Act.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This is the Bill that we have to take, and we shall take it clause by clause.

*COLONEL LEGGE said there were various sections referred to in the clauses of this Bill. The Army Act consisted of a large number of sections—some of which were not mentioned in this Bill—to which he thought it was very desirable that attention should be called. He thought it was necessary that they should have an opportunity of calling attention to certain matters dealt with in the Army Act. He wished to refer to a question raised in Section 15.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member had better confine his remarks to the point which is now before the Chair. I would remind him that the whole of the Army Act cannot be discussed in detail now, and from what I can gather of his point, I am not so sure that it can be raised at all upon this Bill. At any rate this is not the time.

MR. HALDANE said that he explained the whole scope of the Bill yesterday.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) asked if he could raise the question of the prices paid in the schedule.

*THE CHAIRMAN: We have not come to that yet.

MR. CLAUD HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton, E.) moved to leave out of Clause 1 the words—

> "This Act may be cited as the Army (Annual) Act 1906."

The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had just stated that he explained the whole thing yesterday, but it was only a very short explanation, and this Bill contained some very great alterations in regard to such matters as punishments inflicted upon the soldiers.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member is addressing himself to the question before the Committee, and he appears to be dealing with other clauses.

MR. CLAUDE HAY submitted that he was dealing with Clause 1. What he wished to state to the Committee was that by the alterations described in the memorandum they were altering the whole purpose of the Army (Annual) Act in the sense that soldiers were no longer to be treated as they were under the old Act.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those arguments certainly seem to me to come in at a later stage of this Bill. We are now dealing simply with Clause 1, which says "This Act may be cited as the Army (Annual) Act 1906."

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that was precisely what he objected to.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 2:

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said he desired to allude to the days on which the Army Act would expire. The Act contained the three following sub-sections—

> "(*a*) In the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man, on the thirtieth day of April; and (*b*) Elsewhere in Europe, inclusive of Malta, also in the West Indies and America, on the thirty-first day of July; and (*c*) Elsewhere, whether within or without His Majesty's dominions, on the thirty-first day of December."

He wished to know what the object was of maintaining all those sub-sections in the Army Bill from time to time.

MR. HALDANE said the Army Act was only in operation from year to year, and it was necessary to make provision for the expiration of the Act upon different days in the more distant parts of the Empire. This clause followed the usual precedent by which they were allowed a little longer time in those parts of the world.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD asked what was the object of following this ancient custom. He really could not understand the object of it.

MR. HALDANE said this had always been the custom, and there must be an appreciable difference in the time in which the arrangements can be made in the United Kingdom and places like Malta and the other more distant parts of the King's dominions. Consequently, the days had always been different.

Colonel LOCKWOOD said they had been told that this information could be conveyed by telegraph, and therefore he did not see the object of the provision. Although he could not see the object of it, yet he felt sure that it was a worthy custom.

Mr. HALDANE said it was a good old Conservative custom, and he trusted that the hon. and gallant Member would not press his objection to it.

Mr. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) said that under the Bill which they were now discussing it was proposed to abolish flogging in the Army, and he quite agreed with that proposal. He wished, however, to point out that whilst a soldier within the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man could not be flogged after the thirtieth of April, 1906, a soldier elsewhere in Europe, inclusive of Malta, the West Indies, and America could be flogged up to the thirty-first day of July, 1906, and elsewhere, whether within or without His Majesty's dominions, the day fixed was the thirty-first day of December, 1906. He thought that was an anomalous position, and he wished the right hon. Gentleman to explain to the Committee what steps he was taking in order that the soldiers in all parts of the Empire might receive equal treatment.

Mr. HALDANE explained that flogging could only take place under regulations, and instructions would be given by him that no flogging should take place in the interval between now and the time when this Bill would come into operation.

Mr. FORSTER said the House had expressed so strong a feeling in regard to the abolition of flogging in the Army that he thought the Committee would be quite ready to go to the expense of paying the cost of cablegrams to different parts of the Empire in order to prevent soldiers being flogged.

In reply to Lord Turnour,

Mr. HALDANE said the Act only applied to the subjects of the King.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said that when the Army (Annual) Bill was before the House last year the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool desired that under this measure the Isle of Wight should be treated as a Colony, in order that the provisions of this Bill should come into operation at the same time as they came into force in the distant part of the Empire. He wished to know what the hon. Member for Abercromby wished to be done now with regard to the Isle of Wight. Did he still desire to have it dealt with as a Colony?

*Colonel LEGGE: Surely it does not take three months to communicate with Malta.

Mr. HALDANE said it had always been the custom to allow a longer time in those distant parts, and they had strictly followed precedents in the clause they were now discussing.

Mr. FORSTER said he did not wish to take up the time of the Committee but he did want to know particularly what the right hon. Gentleman intended to do in the matter. [Ministerial cries of "Oh, oh!"] He wished to remind hon. Members opposite that during the last session of Parliament they sat up all night on this question, principally discussing flogging in the Army. The House then took a very strong line, and that line had been reflected in the proposals which the Secretary of State for War had now made. The House had come to the determination that flogging in the Army should be abolished, and it was no answer to the question that he had raised for the right hon. Gentleman to say that different parts of the Empire were situated at varying distances from the metropolis. He wanted to know what steps the Secretary of State for War intended to take in order to secure that His Majesty's soldiers in all parts of His Majesty's dominions, however remote they might be from this House, should receive equal treatment after the 30th day of April this year.

Mr. HALDANE said the hon. Member had apparently not read the clause.

Clause 2, which they were now discussing, provided that the Army Act should remain in force up to the 30th day of April, 1907, within the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man; up to the 31st day of July, 1907, elsewhere in Europe, inclusive of Malta, the West Indies and America; and elsewhere up to the 31st day of December, 1907. This Act abolished flogging and as a matter of fact there would be no flogging in any of those places.

Mr. FORSTER said if the right hon. Gentleman would read the clause in his own Bill he would see that there was a period of time between the 30th day of April and the 31st day of July, 1906, during which flogging could take place in Malta, the West Indies, and America. Within the United Kingdom the Act would run from the 30th April this year and terminate on the 30th April next year. Elsewhere in Europe, inclusive of Malta, the West Indies and America, it would run from the 31st July 1906, to the 31st July 1907. The period he specially wished to direct the right hon. Gentleman's attention to was from the 30th April until the 31st day of July this year. From this it appeared to him that during one period in one portion of His Majesty's dominions there would be one law, and in another portion there would be another law as from the 30th day of April this year until the 31st day of July this year. What steps did the right hon. Gentleman intend to take in order to secure that between the 30th April this year and the 31st July this year the same protection would be meted out to soldiers elsewhere in Europe, inclusive of Malta, the West Indies and America, as was meted out within the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. The Secretary of State for War had not told them what steps he intended to take to secure that the regulations in those remote parts of the Empire would be altered to bring them into consonance with the regulations in this country.

Mr. HALDANE said he could assure the hon. Member that flogging would be stopped in all parts of the Empire.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he had handed in an Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's Amendment is not in order because it was handed in after I had put the Question "that the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. CLAUDE HAY, who was greeted with cries of "Order, order" from the Ministerial Benches, said that he rose to move his Amendment just before the Chairman rose to put the Question.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot move an Amendment now, because I have put the clause, and the House is now discussing the whole clause.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY, proposed to move, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," but the Chairman, being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, refused to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

Question again proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill"

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport), asked if it would be in order to refer to the system of reduction of fines from the pay of soldiers. If there was no objection to the deduction of fines from the soldiers' pay how was it that so much was said about the immorality of deducting fines from the pay of coolies, and truck generally.

Mr. HALDANE said he did not think that question arose under this Bill.

Lord BALCARRIES (Lancashire, N. Chorley) said that under the Punishment Clause of the Army Act fines were specially mentioned.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY hoped the Secretary of State for War would indicate whether he could raise this point or not, as he wished to know whether this was a proper time to raise it.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) asked if it was not in order to discuss any of the provisions of the Army Act contemplated by this particular Section.

The CHAIRMAN: No, it would not be in order to do that. The point raised by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman can be met only by a new clause.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he handed in a notice of Amendment and rose to move it, although perhaps he did not meet the Chairman's eye. The Amendment he handed in was to omit Sub-section 1 of Clause 2, which was a Motion identical with the Motion moved by the hon. Member for Bristol last year. He submitted that his Amendment was in order, and he rose to move it at the right time.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's Amendment would have been perfectly in order if it had been moved at the right time. This only shows the great inconvenience of handing in Amendments at the last moment.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said that surely in common fairness, if he was unable to hear the words of the Chairman owing to the interruption of hon. Members opposite, if he handed in an Amendment at the Table in due time and gave proper notice——

The CHAIRMAN: I may state that the hon. Member actually spoke upon the clause itself before he handed in his Amendment. [Opposition cries of "Name, name."]

Mr. CLAUDE HAY on a point of order, submitted that speaking to a clause did not prevent him having the right to move an Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I have ruled on that point.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY thought that inasmuch as the whole Army Act was raised by this Bill they were entitled on this occasion to discuss any point that was contained in the Army Act. Surely it would be competent for him to raise a point connected with the punishment of soldiers.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought I had explained that to the right hon. Gentleman. The general scope of the Army Act does arise, but not the Army Act in detail. Otherwise we should have it before us clause by clause.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE, said that in the very last session of Parliament this same point was raised and it was then ruled that the Army Act could be discussed in detail.

The CHAIRMAN: By means of new clauses.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY, said he submitted with all humility and with great respect to the Chair——

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have already given my ruling on that point. The hon. Member's Amendment was handed in after he himself had spoken upon the Question, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. CLAUDE HAY asked if the Chairman would give his ruling upon the following point. He wished to know if an hon. Member spoke to a clause was he thereby excluded from moving any Amendment to that clause.

*The CHAIRMAN: Certainly, that is the rule.

Lord BALCARRES asked if the putting of a clause from the Chair prevented any hon. Member from moving an Amendment?

*The CHAIRMAN: I commence by naming Clause 1 or Clause 2, as the case may be, and that is the time for any hon. Member to get up to move Amendments of which notice has not been handed in, but after I have put the clause from the Chair hon. Members cannot move Amendments to the words of the clause.

Mr CLAUDE HAY asked if hon. Members did not happen to hear what was put from the Chair, did that preclude them from moving Amendments of which they had previously given notice?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must try and make myself a little more clear to hon. Members.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University) said he understood that this Bill was not necessary to stop flogging, because it could be done by regulations. If the right hon. Gentleman could stop flogging from now to the 31st July, why could he not continue to do so for the whole year, and what was the necessity for this clause?

MR. HALDANE said this clause did not relate merely to flogging but to a variety of other things. It was withn the power of the Army Council to give directions that there should be no flogging in the Army. There was power under the Army Act to make regulations in regard to flogging, and they wished to take advantage of that power and say that there should, in future, be no power to flog any soldiers.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that this clause was really the whole body of the Act. Would the right hon. Gentleman inform the Committee how far the common soldier knew the provisions of the Army Act contained in the Bill now before the Committee. He wished to know what measures had been taken to make the recruit upon enlisting, and also the soldier, acquainted with the provisions of this Act, which amounted to some 200 or 300 pages and almost as many clauses. He wished to know what number of copies of this Act were available for the common soldier; and how far the Act was made understandable to him, and whether it was not a fact that the only copy available to the common soldier was that which was kept in the orderly room, which was the last place which the soldier desired to visit when in barracks? The whole thing was a farce and had been a farce for years. They all believed that in this Parliament they had opened up a new era. They wanted to discard Party politics and narrow divisions in this matter, and come to some common purpose and adopt some very humane interpretation of the conditions and regulations under which soldiers served their Sovereign. He appealed to the Committee to support the view he took, because itwas a feeling which he had entertained for a good many years, but which, unfortunately, the Committee had always given the go-by to.

MAJOR SEELY asked, if those were the views of the hon. Member, why he voted with the Government last year against the views which he had now expressed?

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he did not think he voted at all upon this question last session.

MAJOR SEELY: Oh, yes, you did.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division if he was going to vote with him this year. A common soldier knew no more than the man in the moon what the provisions of the Army Act were. This subject had been the sport of Parties in this House for a long time, and he was anxious that it should be removed from the arena of Party politics altogether. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] Had the Secretary of State for War taken any measure to make the situation clear to the private soldier in respect to the alterations which would be in force after the passing of this Bill into law? He submitted that they were bound to realise that this Army Act was no kindness to the Army itself, because it was an Act which a man when he enlisted accepted almost as a chain round his neck, not merely whilst he was in the Army but even after he had served the King, and after he had left the ranks of His Majesty's Forces to join the great industrial army. He wished the Secretary of State for War, who had made a close study of the armies of the whole world, to show that in regard to this question he had taken a new, broad, and progressive view in this Bill. He hoped he would be able to show that he had introduced Amendments which would make the Act more humane and up-to-date in every respect, thus making the future of the soldier happier and brighter. He would reserve his remarks on the subject dealt with in the Memorandum which preceded this Bill, viz.: the alterations in nomenclature in regard to those unfortunate young men in military prisons. A stage had now been reached in this new Parliament when this must not be regarded as a hardy annual for the discussion of minor points which had characterised upon one occasion the discussion until 9 o'clock the next morning. They expected from the present Government, which held itself up as sympathetic to all the aspirations of labour in the Government's service, some greater ideal in this matter than was comprised in merely saying ditto to what their predecessors at the War Office had done. On the question of courts-martial he had endeavoured to extract from his right hon. friend some information in regard to what appeared to be a gross scandal. He referred to the case of a private soldier who enjoyed an Irish name. He regretted that in regard to this Question the right hon. Gentleman had thought fit to give him the usual routine Answers from the War Office, and he could not help saying that they were the Answers of the officials, and were not replies based upon the right hon. Gentleman's own examination of the subject. The case he raised was that of a man who was tried at 11 o'clock by a court-martial of which he received notice at 8 o'clock the same morning. Under the regulations every soldier was entitled to twenty-four hours' notice, but this Irishman was sentenced after only three hours notice to a long term of imprisonment. The main testimony upon which he was convicted was that he bore upon his left fore-arm certain marks, whereas as a matter of fact he bore no marks at all on his left because they were on his right arm. He had never been able to get from the War Minister what had happened to the officers who convicted that man upon evidence which the greatest simpleton would have been able to measure up, viz., that he had a mark on his left arm when it was actually on his right arm. This might be a matter for hilarity with hon. Members opposite but it was not for the unfortunate man who suffered this ignominy. This Act allowed the continuance and gross injustices of all the worst forms of Russian autocracy, and he for one was prepared to sit up all night until the Secretary of State gave definite declarations that he would organise courts-martial upon such a basis that gross outrages of this kind could not be perpetrated on soldiers. [MINISTERIAL Interruptions.] It might be more convenient for hon. Members opposite to go home, but he was prepared to stay and insist upon a reply from the Government upon this important question. The present Government came into power to remove all the ills and injustices and to do away with all the iniquities which were alleged to have been perpetrated by the last Government. The next thing he wished to ask the Secretary of State for War was whether he could see his way in regard to courts-martial to assimilate the practice which had long prevailed with such admirable results in the Navy and adopt a similar system in regard to the Army. Why on earth did an officer in the Army if accused of some dereliction of duty, or some omission or commission, suffer loss of his position and be cast upon the world with a stain upon his character which he could never remove? Why in this respect could they not have the same practice with regard to the Army as was in force in regard to the Navy? There had been a sinister practice which allowed the authorities of the Army to tell a man he had better leave the Army without reason assigned. Such a man might have against him merely a whisper which was worse than the open word. If they got in the Navy a system of courts-martial which had worked so much to the benefit of the service, why should the sister service not have the same benefit? He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman why he could not include the suggestion he had made in the reforms of the Army which he had undertaken.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) expressed his regret that the Government had not brought on the discussion of such an important measure as this before 12 o'clock. This was a Bill which to some extent affected the liberties and the lives of some 300,000 of their fellow citizens. He did not forget that a great many reforms were wrung out of the Government at all-night sittings. He regretted that the Act referred to was not fully recited, because there was no other way of understanding it. They ought to fully understand on behalf of the working men whom they professed to represent whether under the Army Act with or without regulations flogging could take place. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Divide, divide."] He did not think there ought to be any attempt to prevent the discussion of such an important matter simply because hon. Members opposite had not read the Army Act and did not know anything about it. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Would the right hon. Gentleman give him a distinct assurance that under the Army Act as it now existed no flogging could take place.

COLONEL KENYON - SLANEY thought he was fairly entitled without moving any specific Amendment to ask for information on matters directly connected with the treatment of those individuals who were subject to military law. He wished to ask whether he was entitled to avail himself of this opportunity, because this might be the only opportunity he would have of raising the question.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the right hon. Gentleman will put his Question I will rule upon it.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY said he wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was going to continue to maintain in force the practice of punishment which consisted in deducting fines from the pay of the private soldier.

MR. HALDENE said there was nothing in this Bill which touched that question,

COLONEL KENYON SLANEY: But do you propose to alter that practice?

MR. HALDANE: No, we do not.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he was willing to assimilate the practice in the Army to that of the Navy in regard to courts-martial dealing with surrenders by military officers. Last session he remembered that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean made a long speech upon this very subject and he pressed for an answer from Mr. Brodrick, but he did not get much satisfaction beyond the statement that the military authorities would consider whether they could assimilate the practice.

MR. HALDANE said that in the Army the theory was that the governing power could dismiss any officer from the service on proper cause shown. Secondly, there had always been the practice of holding courts of inquiry. That had often proved a merciful practice, because then they were placed in a position to estimate whether it should be followed up by a court-martial, and courts of inquiry were instituted in order to inform the mind of the commanding authority as to whether a soldier should be dismissed, or dealt with in one form or another, or committed to a court-martial. It was not always in the interests of the soldier that there should be a court-martial. He thought the courts of inquiry when properly conducted were a very useful institution, and he should not like to say that every one against whom a charge was made should be necessarily court-martialled.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said this question was raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean with regard to the surrenders in South Africa. It was thought by many hon. Members of the House that a court-martial upon any officer who surrendered would be preferable to a court of inquiry, and he confessed that he did not think Mr. Brodrick gave them much elucidation of that subject.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Nor of any other subject.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said he should be glad to know whether the Secretary of State for War thought a continuance of the present system would be sufficient, or whether he was of opinion that a reconsideration of the question would be a good thing for the soldier. He thought the court of inquiry was a merciful thing in many cases.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he wished to propose an Amendment to Section 4 of the Army Act. He gathered from the practice which had obtained in previous years that the right course seemed to be to bring up a new clause for insertion in the Army Act which it was proposed to renew. He took it that the proper place to do it would be by way of addition to that section.

THE CHAIRMAN: No Amendment can be moved to this clause.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he was under the impression that if they passed Sub-section 2 as it stood, they would not be precluded from proposing a new clause.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will not be precluded from moving any new clause which is in order.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said Clause 2 enacted that from certain dates the Army Act should take effect. In the other section it would be found that they were merely trifling with the Act, by calling imprisonment detention and suchlike trivialities.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That question does not arise now, but upon a subsequent clause. We are now discussing only Clause 2.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that the whole of the Army Act was re-enacted by this particular section, with the exception of those trifling matters referred to in other parts of the Bill.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, the Army Act is being re-enacted by this section, but the alterations are dealt with in later clauses of this Bill.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the answer given by the Secretary of State for War was most unsatisfactory; in fact it was no answer at all. He stated that in the Army there were courts of inquiry which were more lenient than courts-martial. If courts-martial were worked so well in the Navy, why should the same practice not be adopted in regard to the Army? In the Navy courts-martial prevailed where they did not prevail in the Army, and they ought not to be content until the Army had the same measure of courts-martial as obtained in the Navy. Then there was that section of the forces in regard to which the right hon. Gentleman in the speech he delivered, when the Army Estimates were presented to the House, adumbrated certain great intentions—he referred, of course, to the Militia. The law which was established by this Bill made a Militiaman and Volunteer not subject to all the penalties and disabilities which a soldier would be subjected to if this measure was passed, unless in his unit he was commanded by an officer of the regular forces. Surely the Secretary of State for War desired to put all those who served in the armed forces of the Crown under one system of discipline.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that in deference to the wishes of hon. Gentlemen opposite he would not lengthen his remarks, but having studied this subject very closely, and being aware of its importance, he urged the Secretary of State for War to give some information as to his intention upon this Question.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) said it struck him, as a new Member of this House, that when such a serious subject was under consideration a more suitable opportunity ought to have been given for discussing it. With every wish to treat this Question seriously, it did seem to him very unfair that such a large subject should be brought on now. To see the levity with which this Question was treated by hon. Members on the Ministerial side, one would really think that this Bill, upon which the whole existence of the Army depended, was a matter to be treated as something of no importance. It was not consistent with the dignity of the House to treat this Question in such a way.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick) said if the hon. Member had been in the House for the last five years he would have known all about the dignity of the House.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member for Barkston Ash be good enough to apply himself to the Question before the Committee?

Mr. LANE-FOX said he was sorry if he had wandered from the scope of the debate. The point he wished to make was the way in which the House had treated this great subject and the levity which the hon. Members on the Ministerial side had displayed in regard to it. The question raised by the hon. Member for Hoxton about the way in which this Act was brought before the notice of the soldiers was very important, because the present system was an absolute farce. The provisions of the Act were not properly brought before the notice of the members of His Majesty's forces. As a rule, when a person joined a force, a long list of the punishments were read over to him in an almost inaudible voice, and all he heard were certain phrases such as "punishable by death," and other phrases of a similar character. That was an absolute farce, and it was not the way soldiers should be treated. It seemed to him that they did not do their duty by the forces of the Crown. Their object should be to make the Army more popular. It was only upon occasions like this that questions of discipline could be discussed, and they ought to be gone into more fully.

The Chairman: The hon. Member is not discussing the Question before the Chair, and I may add that he has hardly said one single word that is relevant.

Mr. LANE-FOX said he would not discuss the matter further, and thanked the House for the kindness they had shown in listening to him.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that this Act, which was sought to be re-enacted by this section, bristled from one end to the other with pains and penalties. It seemed to him that the Army was recruited with pains and penalties and they were trying to keep it together with pains and penalties, and the only thing the private soldier heard when these things were read over to him was a series of pains and penalties ranging from death down to various small punishments. That was not the way to make an efficient Army. If they wished to have a strong Army they must recruit the men from the right sort of people, and the Army regulations would have to be such that persons joining would have some prospects of earning a decent living.

The Chairman: That has nothing whatever to do with the Question before the Committee.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 195; Noes, 36. (Division List No. 28).

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A.Acland(Christchurch)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W.C.B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordsh.)
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cherry, R. R.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew,W
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Corbett, CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)

Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W Bateman(Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montague, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Money, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholson, Chas. N. (Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Captain Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Paul, Herbert
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thos. (W. Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, H. L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, A.H.(AshtonunderLyne)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Stanger, H. Y.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Waterlow, D. S.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. George Whiteley und Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, RtHnSirAlex.F.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, CaptainJames(Down, E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardie, JKeir (MerthyrTydvil)
Hervey, F.W.F.(BuryS.Edmds
Hunt, Rowland
Jowett, F. W.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col. A.R
Macpherson, J. T.
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Seddon, J.
Starkey, John R.
Summerbell, T.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Turnour, Viscount
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. Watson Rutherford and Mr. Claude Hay.

Clause 3:—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

LORD TURNOUR said he wished to raise the question of the breakfast which was given to the soldier.

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be much more convenient to raise that subject when the schedule is reached.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he desired to move an Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: I put the Question and I gave the hon. Member for Hoxton his chance. I may say that the hon. Member's Amendment is not in order because it would not make sense of the clause.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said his Amendment was in the actual wording of an Amendment accepted by the Chairman last session.

THE CHAIRMAN: This Amendment is not the same at all.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 4:—

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said he wished to ask one or two questions about this new policy of detention. This was a proposal to prevent soldiers convicted of purely military offences from being subjected to the stigma attaching to imprisonment. It was, however, quite a new punishment, and they ought to know exactly what the punishment consisted of. He had had many men under him at various times and he was sorry to say that he had had in his battalion men who had been to prison, and he had seen the bad effects which a long period of imprisonment in a civil prison had had upon the men in the Army. He wished to know if it would not be possible in the case of men detained for purely military offences to have them taught some trade or some method of shooting practice with military rifles whilst being detained. Instead of doing what was done in the old days, namely, subjecting the soldier to the ordinary treatment which was meted out to civilian prisoners, they ought under the new system to try and make the period of detention one which would tend towards the improvement of the soldier. He would like the Secretary of State for War to tell them exactly what detention meant, for he felt sure that the Committee, and in particular all old soldiers, would be very glad to hear his explanation. As regarded imprisonment, he drew a clear line between punishment for military offences and punishment for offences of a disgraceful character. If a soldier was found guilty of an offence of a disgraceful character, the sooner he was turned out of the force the better. Therefore, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to draw a very straight and clear line between these two classes of offences, and between the punishment to be meted out to them.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Mr. CALDWELL) had meantime taken the Chair temporarily.

MR. HALDANE having risen to reply,

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! There is no question before the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. FORSTER asked, if under the Chairman's ruling it was impossible to move an Amendment before the clause had been put, when was it in order to move an Amendment?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It was quite in order for the right hon. Member who spoke last to have concluded by moving an Amendment, but he did not do so; therefore, there was no Question before the Committee, and as the Secretary of State for War got up to reply, I had to put a Question in order that he might make his reply, Consequently, the Question I put was "that Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

MR. FORSTER asked if it was essential in their discussions that any hon. Member who rose to speak first should move an Amendment, and on his failing to move an Amendment, did that prevent other hon. Members, on whatever side of the House they might sit, from moving Amendments?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Failure on the part of an hon. Member who speaks first to move an Amendment would not preclude any other hon. Member from moving an Amendment. In this instance, however, no one rose to move any Amendment, and as the

Secretary of State for War was commencing his reply and there was no Question before the House, I put the Question that the clause stand part.

MR. FORSTER said he did not wish to take up time unnecessarily, but the point he was raising was one of importance. His hon. friend put a specific Question to the right hon. Gentleman who got up at once to reply. Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman got up, hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side naturally refrained from rising in order to move Amendments. If the mere fact that a Minister on the front Ministerial Bench rose immediately after a Question had been addressed to him was to prevent anyone from moving an Amendment, it seemed to him that it would be impossible for anyone to get a proper opportunity of proposing Amendments.

****THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN**: When I rose I stated distinctly that there was no Question before the Committee. That then was the time for hon. Members to have notified any Amendment they desired to move. As no one rose to do so, and as there was no Question before the Committee I had no other course but to put the clause.

MR. FORSTER, on a point of order, was proceeding to further discuss the matter——

***THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN**: I think this point has now been thoroughly discussed, and I call upon the Secretary of State for War.

MR. FORSTER, amid cries of "Order, order," said he desired to know how it was possible that an Amendment could be moved until the Question had been put from the Chair.

***THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN**: As I have said, an Amendment might have been moved when I rose and called "Order, order." There was then no Question before the Committee, and that was the time for anyone to have got up and moved an Amendment. No one got up, and therefore I had to put a Question before the Committee, and the only Question I could put was "that Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked whether, if an hon. Member handed in at the Table a notice of an Amendment and rose to move it and the Chairman called upon someone else, was he *ipso facto* precluded from moving it? That was the effect of the ruling which the Chairman had given.

***THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN**: I have nothing to do with any previous rulings. Before I put the Question I made inquiry if any Amendments to this clause had been handed in, and as no notices of Amendments had been given I put the Question.

MR. HALDANE said he was in agreement with all that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wellington had said. The change made in the clause was little more than a change in name. When they sentenced the soldier to imprisonment, whilst he was undergoing that imprisonment he would wear uniform and not prison clothes, and for hard labour he would have drill and other military exercises. It was now proposed to substitute for imprisonment the term "detention in barracks," and the prisoner would be subjected to military exercises and drill which would tend to assist his career as a soldier. With regard to the question of whether it would be possible to teach such soldiers whilst undergoing imprisonment civilian trades, that was a subject which was worthy of attention, but in order to do it they would have to make provision for it of a special character.

LORD BALCARRES said that he had awaited the statement of the Secretary of State for War before suggesting that any Amendment should be moved. Had his explanation been unsatisfactory he imagined that it would have been within his power to move an Amendment accordingly. He wished to ask, however, for a little further information on the question as to the place where the soldiers undergoing detention were to be confined. The memorandum said that the soldiers undergoing detention would be confined in detention barracks. What were detention barracks and where were they? Was this to be a new class of military prison under a more euphemistic name, or did it mean that the existing barracks or some portion of them would be called ordinary barracks and the other detention barracks? He thought it was necessary that there should be some further definition of what this detention was to be, so that it would not be reduced to a complete farce.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he was opposed to this clause being passed as part of the Bill, because he considered it nothing more nor less than a piece of rank hypocrisy. Hon. Members had protested against this kind of thing for years.

* The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not discussing the clause.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that this clause did not abolish death as the punishment, because it occurred a good many times in the Act. Sub-section 3 of Clause 4 provided that instead of the words "death or penal servitude or of imprisonment" there should be substituted the words "death, penal servitude or imprisonment, or other detention." Therefore, the words "or other detention" were to be added at the end. If the Government were serious in proposing any real amelioration of the soldier's lot there would be something reasonable to discuss, but to come here with a section like this, simply juggling with phrases, and asking the Committee seriously to pass a section which consisted of altering one word from another in order to take away the stigma attaching to imprisonment for military offences, was simply the kind of hypocrisy which had been the leading note of the Government proposals this session. It was the same kind of thing as the alleged extravagances in the Army Estimates which the Government said they were going to put an end to. Instead of doing this the Government came down with a piffling clause like this which simply altered phrases, and then claimed that they had made the lot of the soldier better. The effect of these proposals was that the Government were going to deal with these offences exactly in the same way as before, but they were going to call the punishment by a nicer name. Anything more utterly hypocritical, hollow, and stupid he had never had the opportunity of witnessing. He had seen many stupid things done in Parliament——

Mr. JOYCE: In the shipping line?

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that in reply to that unmannerly interruption he might say that he was not in the shipping line. It was because these suggestions did not make any alteration whatever in the soldier's lot, but simply juggled with words and phrases, that he objected to them, and he should vote against this clause if he went into the lobby alone.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he had intimated in an earlier part of the proceedings that he should have something to say upon military prisons. He had addressed Questions to the Secretary for War as to the number of military prisoners detained in civil prisons, and the reply he gave indicated the number of soldiers who for various offences underwent punishment in the local and convict prisons. What he wished to know in regard to this clause was what arrangement the Secretary of State for War proposed to make to prevent a certain number of these men who were sent to local prisons being sent to those places of incarceration. At the present moment there were a number of men sentenced for petty offences—and they were mostly young men and practically boys—who had placed upon them that which no civilian ever had, namely, a taint which not only ran all through their military career but followed them right through their civil life after leaving the Army. That was a scandal and a reproach upon the Army, and a matter which ought to be dealt with immediately by the Secretary of State for War. Three or four years ago, during the war in South Africa, ship loads of soldiers who had been sentenced for minor offences were sent to South Africa, and the Prison Commissioners suddenly received an order for these men to be imprisoned, and it was an absolute fact that soldiers were put into cells which from the point of view of health had been condemned as unfit for even murderers. It was a perfect disgrace that the arrangements in the Army permitted of such a state of things. He invited the Secretary of State for War to consider very seriously the point that soldiers who might get into petty street rows or commit other small offences should not be handed over to the police, but should be brought more and more under the control of the military authorities, in order that they might be treated more upon the lines that "boys will be boys," and not be submitted to a state of things which meant that for ever after they would have a stain upon their character. This memorandum asked the Committee to believe that some very great change had been made in the system of military punishments, because they were now going to be allowed to wear uniforms instead of that worn by prisoners in the common prisons. There was nothing to show that what was contained in this portentous memorandum made any real stride in advance in dealing with the punishment of young men who, for some small offence or other, were committed to military prisons. What would these youngsters know of the Army Act?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! We not are dealing with the memorandum at the present time, but with Clause 4.

MR. CLAUDE HAY submitted that the memorandum explained Clause 4. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Order, order!"] Clause 4 provided that there should be a certain change of the condition under which prisoners were committed to military prisons where they had to undergo punishments. He incurred some great unpopularity some three or four years ago for making hon. Members opposite miss their trains because he insisted upon getting a hearing for military prisoners confined in military gaols. Not long after that time he noticed that upon one day 712 men were liberated from civil prisons where they had been detained for various military offences. He appealed most earnestly—and everybody sitting on the Opposition benches he was sure would endorse his appeal—to the Secretary of State for War, not merely in this matter to make a difference in nomenclature relating to the term of imprisonment, but to go a step further forward and to see that young men who wore the King's uniform and committed minor civil or even great military offences were dealt with more leniently, and were never put into civil prisons if it could possibly be prevented. Civil prisons were only open to military offenders if they committed some felony from a civil point of view. They were not, however, common felons, but men who in their youth might have committed offences against this Bill, the provisions of which were absolutely unknown to them and who were consequently subjected to terms of imprisonment which would never be undergone by a man if he had not joined the Army, although he might have committed far greater offences than those committed by the soldier.

CAPTAIN BARING said that the subjects dealt with by courts-martial had been altered so as to include this new sentence of detention. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman wished to go on with the system of having courts-martial sitting for three months.

LORD TURNOUR said he agreed with what the hon. Member for Chorley had said. He wished to know if provision had been made in the present Estimates for these detention barracks, and he should also like to know whether they would be separated from the rest of the barracks. Would they be a sort of compound or would they be connected with the rest of the barracks. He did not think the name was a good one, and he should really like some precise explanation of what detention barracks were.

*MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) said if the Secretary of State for War would compare the proposed Amendments in Section 4 with the present clauses of the Army Act he would see some curious inconsistencies which he was sure he would be desirous of remedying while the Bill was in Committee. There was, for instance, the scale of punishments in Section 44 of the Army Act. Each punishment in the scale was greater than the one which followed it, and if the right hon. Gentleman wished to do away with the ignominies of "imprisonment" by replacing the word "detention" he would not accomplish it in this way, because "detention" would be a severer punishment than "discharge with ignominy" which followed it. If "detention" was intended to be less severe than "imprisonment," why did the right hon. Gentleman defeat his own object by adding the proviso that—

> "For the purposes of commutation and revision of punishment detention shall not be deemed to be a less punishment than imprisonment if the term of detention is longer than the term of imprisonment."

Surely Section 21 required amendment to enable this punishment of detention to be properly worked in with the rest of the Army Act. It was impossible to introduce a new word into one of the sections of the Army Act and not into the other sections. The Amendments as proposed in this Bill were absolute nonsense if they were considered in reference to Proviso 10. He noticed that in Subsection 4 the word "accused" was substituted for the word "prisoner," but why was this alteration not carried out right through the Army Act? In the interests of the Army and the officers who had to administer the Act let the right hon. Gentleman see that all these Amendments should be made to apply to the whole of the Act, because as they stood at the present time they made absolute nonsense. He wished to know whether detention barracks had been provided for in the Estimates.

MR. JOYCE said he had been an impatient listener to a good deal of what had been said. He had heard this Bill described in various terms, but he would like to speak of it from a Labour point of view. He wished to know whether officers and men were placed on the same footing when they committed the same offences. He did not think they were. If the present War Minister would stand up and say that every man in the Army was treated equally before the law then he should be quite satisfied. He did not care much about the Army Annual Bill, but when he heard that there was one law for the private soldier and another for the officer he thought it was quite time that this state of things should be changed. He stood up to voice the opinions of working men who demanded that this law should be changed. He would like to ask the present War Secretary what had been done in regard to the men who quite recently tarred and feathered a brother officer. Were they prisoners, and would they be subjected to the same punishment as a private soldier? If the right hon. Gentleman said they would, then let him have his Bill, but if not it was quite time the law should be changed, and he was prepared to sit all through the night to see that justice was done and that officers and men were placed in the same position.

MR. HALDANE said there was no offence committed by a private soldier which was not equally an offence if committed by an officer. There was no difference in the offence or in the liability to imprisonment. He thought the hon. Member opposite would find that he had been quoting from an old Army Act; the difficulties he had referred to did not exist in the amended form of the Act. With regard to detention barracks, there was no magic about it. It was left to the administrators of the Act to say that certain parts should be used as detention barracks.

LORD BALCARRES said it was obvious that this matter had not been fully thought out. If they were going to locate a special part of the barracks for detention they would have practically to start a new system of military prisons. He suggested as a protest, not against the system, but against their inability to move amendments, that they ought to have a new clause added to the Bill dealing with this question.

LORD CASTLEREAGH said he did not see the object of attempting to delude the soldier by telling him that detention was better than imprisonment. He should like to know what relation "detention" bore to "confinement to barracks."

LORD TURNOUR said he hoped before the sense of the House was taken that the Secretary of State for War would tell them why the term "detention barracks" had been invented.

Question put and agreed to

Clause 5 :

LORD BALCARRES moved that the first 4 lines of Clause 5 be omitted. He said that this would give the Secretary of State for War an opportunity of explaining in fuller detail the object and necessity of the clause.

MR. WHITLEY said the proposal would make absolute nonsense of the clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it will make sense, and an Amendment which will not make sense of the clause is not in order.

LORD BALCARRES said his object was not to move an Amendment but to get an explanation from the Secretary of State for War as to the necessity of this clause. He moved the omission of sub-section 1.

Amendment proposed—

"To omit Sub-section 1."—(*Lord Balcarres.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. HALDANE said there was great need for this clause. There were a considerable number of persons who enlisted in the Yeomanry and other branches of the regular forces, and many of them had enlisted for service in the colonies. There had been cases of desertion from the Regular Army in order to get the higher pay in colonial regiments during war. The possibilities of enlisting in Colonial Forces were greater to-day than they were years ago. If the noble Lord would read Section 13 of the Army Act he would see the necessity of this clause.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD TURNOUR moved that for the words "Yeomanry" the words "Imperial Yeomanry" should be substituted. The word "Yeomanry" was no longer used in the official papers. The doings of the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa were fresh in all their memories, and they were proud of the Imperial Yeomanry. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would allow the words "Imperial Yeomanry" to be substituted for the word "Yeomanry."

Amendment proposed —

"In page 5, line 10, after the word 'The' to insert the word 'Imperial.'"—(*Viscount Turnour.*)—

Question put, "That the word 'Imperial' be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 22; Noes, 181. (Division List No. 29.)

AYES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hn. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Carlile, E. Hildred
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down,E
Dalrymple, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, FWF(BuryS.Edm'ds)
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Rawlinson, John Frederick P
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Viscount Turnour and
Viscount Castlereagh.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordsh.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William

Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W
Corbett, C.H.(Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, H. J. (Tynemouth)
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ellis, Rt. Hon, John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb.John
Greenwood, G. (Pererborough
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hardie, J.Keir(MerthyrTydvil
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W.Bateman(SomersetN)
Horniman, Emslie John

Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (EssexHarwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Chas. (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw
Nicholson, Chas.N.(Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps, Col.Ivor(S'thampton

Pollard, Dr.
Priestley, W. E.B(Bradford,E.
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(WMonm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, AH(Ashton under Lyne)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hn. John
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W. Dudley (Southamt'n
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J.D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

MR. HALDANE said he had a great appreciation of the desire of the noble Lord to commemorate the services of the Yeomanry, but much as he appreciated their services he did not see his way to setting up a monument to them in an Act of Parliament. This clause was in accordance with precedent, and it would not be altered by adding a word which had no legal effect.

LORD CASTLEREAGH thought they should receive some assurance that the word "Imperial" had been omitted through an oversight.

Mr. WHITLEY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD thought the name should be the Imperial Yeomanry, and the right hon. Gentleman was only opposing it because it came from the Opposition side of the House.

MR. HALDANE claimed, "That the Question 'That the Clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Question put, "That the Question 'That the Clause stand part of the Bill' be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 181; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 30.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Allen,A. Acland(Christchurch)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W. (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce,J.A.(Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Claugh, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cullinan, J.
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacy
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, J.
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbert John
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hardie,J Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Colonel Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,ALevy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh,Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeagh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D.(Stafford,W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley,W.E. B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)

Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S Edm'ds
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark

TELLERS FOR THE NOES —Mr. Watson Rutherford and Viscount Turnour.

Question put accordingly, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 180; Noes, 22. (Division List No. 31.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W (Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt Hn. Herbert John
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley,W E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton underLyne)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon.John
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W.Dudley(Southampt'n
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

Tellers for the Ayes —Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hervey,F.W.F.(Bury S Edm'ds
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Rawlinson, John Frederick P
Starkey, John R.
Thomson,W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount

Tellers for the Noes —Mr. Watson Rutherford and Mr. Claude Hay.

Clause 6 :

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 26, to leave out the word 'prescribed.'"—(*Mr. Hicks Beach*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'prescribed' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. HALDANE said there must be some obscurity as to what this meant. The purpose of this clause was to get rid of inaccuracies by prescribing the general officer to whom complaint should be made.

Mr. Seddon rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but the Chairman withheld his assent and declined then to put that Question.

Capt. CRAIG thought it would be a great error to alter this proposal to the prescribed officer. Hitherto they had referred the matter to the commanding officer.

Mr. Seddon rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question, as it appeared to him that the Committee was prepared to come to a decision without that Motion.

Question put, "That the word 'prescribed' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 178; Noes, 21. (Division List No. 32.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Carlyon

Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W (Bedfordshire)
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r.)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S
Herbert, Colonel Ivor (Mon., S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, W Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps, Col Ivor (S'thampton)
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley, W E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey, F W. F. (Bury, S. Edm'ds
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Liddell, Henry
Rawlinson, John Frederick P.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. Hunt and Mr. Ashley.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 7:

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said this Clause seemed to him to be very involved, and it was legislating in the wrong direction. He hoped they would have some little explanation from the Secretary of State for War as to what the clause was for.

Mr. HALDANE said that this clause was to prevent a man who was reduced to a lower grade from forfeiting his pension.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 8, 9, and 10 agreed to.

New Clauses:

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD moved that in Clause 4 of the Army Act relating to courts martial, the word "shameful" should be left out, and the words "without due cause" inserted.

Mr. HALDANE was surprised that this matter had been pressed. It might seem simple, but he would remind the hon. Member that the penalty was death, and this was a very great change to propose, because it would apply the death penalty to anything which might be done stupidly.

Amendment negatived.

*Colonel LEGGE said he thought the time had arrived when the rules for summary punishment, which sanctioned a soldier for certain offences on active service being kept in irons and attached to a fixed object in such manner that he must remain in a fixed position, should be amended, and he sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take this matter into his earnest consideration with a view to putting an end to this form of punishment. He begged to move.

New Clause (Summary punishment).

Mr. HALDANE said this was a punishment which belonged to a period that had long since passed. It only applied to the case of a soldier on active service, where there was no prison at hand. The rule required reconsideration, and he would undertake to look into the matter.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. HUNT moved a new clause dealing with the abolition of fines. The country did not pay their soldiers very much, and he objected to these deductions from the soldiers' pay He begged to move.

New clause (Abolition of fines)—(*Mr. Hunt*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Mr. HALDANE said these deductions were not of the ordinary kind, but were only made in case of conviction by a court martial, where a fine was imposed instead of imprisonment, and that was a more merciful form of sentence.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause be read a second time."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 25; Noes, 173. (Division List No. 33.)

AYES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baring, Hon. Guy (Winchester)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton, Marquess of

Hardie,J Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS Edm'ds
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Liddell, Henry
Macpherson, J. T.
O'Grady, J.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Seddon, J.
Starkey, John R.
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark
Turnour, Viscount

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Hunt and Lord Dalrymple.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Bellairs, Lieutenant Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Black, Arthur W.(Bedfordshire
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. A. (Inverness Burghs)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, J. D. W.
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cherry, R. R.
Clough, W.
Coats, Sir T. Glen(Renfrew,W.)
Corbett C H (Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth
Cullinan, J.
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt HnHerbert John
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harmsworth,Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Colonel Ivor(Mon.,S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hooper, A. G.
Hope,W Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Idris, T H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.
MacVeagh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M'Arthur, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G. Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. H.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Paul, Herbert
Philipps, Col. Ivor(S'thampton
Pollard, Dr.
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E).
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Holland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond,John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw,Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Stanger, H. Y.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras,S.)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES —Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

On the Schedule,

LORD CASTLEREAGH moved to omit from the schedule the words "maximum price."

*THE CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord has handed in two Amendments which apparently hang together. The second of these is to insert the words "a reasonable price," but it is not in order because Clause 3 states that the prices must be specified.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said he should divide the House against this schedule unless they had some assurance that a revision of it would take place. The schedule specified 1½d. for a soldier's breakfast and 4d. a night for lodgings, and this last item was less than was charged at an ordinary "doss-house" in London. He thought they were justified, at the beginning of the career of a new Parliament, in asking that what had been held to be good enough in the past should now be amended. Improvements were going on in all directions in the lot of the workers, and he thought the soldier was entitled to share in those benefits.

MR. HALDANE thought the hon. Member was under some misapprehension as to what this schedule really meant. The schedule did not mean to specify all that the soldier had. What was stated in the schedule was something with which the soldier had to be furnished when he was billeted, but it was the invariable practice to add something out of his pay.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said he should join his hon. friend if he divided against this Bill. If the prices in the schedule were maximum prices, what indeed must be the minimum? In the interests of the common soldier something should be done in this matter, and one of the most sensible things to do would be to make some little provision for giving him better food and not call upon him to spend the greater part of his scanty pay in trying to get the necessaries of life.

MR. ASHLEY asked if it was fair to expect a soldier to commence a long day's work after a breakfast that cost 1½d.

MR. SEDDON said that the soldier was not receiving the attention which might be expected from a Liberal Government. He wished to inform the Secretary of State for War that if he wanted the Army recruited from the best men he would have to offer them more liberal treatment than 1½d. for a breakfast. He did not see why men who were called upon to defend their country should supplement their morning meal out of their scanty earnings. If the Secretary of State for War desired the best men from the industrial classes to enter the ranks of the Army he would have to be more liberal to them in regard to their meals.

MAJOR SEELY said that this was a very old-fashioned schedule, and it had remained unamended because it had been the practice for years to discuss this question at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning. The 1½d. allowed for breakfast was part of a schedule which was settled in the year 1763, but if they divided against the schedule they ought to divide against it as a whole. If they desired to discuss this schedule in all its bearings they had better make up their minds to sit for another two or three hours. The whole thing was a farce.

LORD BALCARRES said that in one case the prices in the schedule were abnormally high, and in another they were abnormally low. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman was going to take this matter into rather more serious consideration than his remarks indicated. Although it might be quite true that very few complaints reached the War Office, he had good reason to believe that there were many sources of complaints to which attention ought to be given.

Mr. HALDANE said this was an old schedule, and he agreed that some of the prices were too high and some too low; he was quite prepared to re-consider the question of the prices charged in the schedule. As regarded the hardship upon the soldier, he was assured that no hardship existed, because the soldier was always very welcome on the march, and did not, on the whole, have a bad time. He would see if he could make it appear in some better form next year.

Captain BARING said the answer of the Secretary of State for War was not so kind and sympathetic as they would have liked it to be.

Mr. BRACE said the soldiers had to provide something out of their pay, and the reason why complaints had not reached the War Office was because under the terms upon which they enlisted this was one of the arrangements provided for.

Mr. KEIR HARDIE said he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had shown some reluctance; but now that he had agreed to reconsider the whole matter he would withdraw his proposal in the hope that the next time it came before the House what he had complained of would have disappeared.

Mr. FENWICK said that hon. Members who sat in the last Parliament would remember that they asked again and again that the Government should consider this question, and they did not even get a sympathetic reply to their appeals. He was glad that the Secretary of State for War had promised to have this matter carefully looked into, and he hoped he would be able to do something to alleviate the lot of the soldier.

Colonel HERBERT said he had commanded a regiment, and during that time no man ever had anything but a good, substantial breakfast, and he never paid for it out of his own pocket. [An Hon. Member: How did he pay for it?] He paid for it out of the sums which had accumulated on the co-operative system in the canteen fund. [An Hon. Member: That is out of his own pocket.] It was not out of his own pocket, because it had never been in his pocket, and it was profit derived from trading of which the soldier got the benefit, but it was not part of his pay.

Lord TURNOUR said the Secretary for War had stated that a substantial meal was provided for the soldiers later in the day. But if the right hon. Gentleman thought a substantial meal at one or two o clock made up for an inadequate breakfast taken at six or seven o'clock in the morning, after which the soldier had to undertake hard work and fatigue, he was sorry to say that he could not agree with him.

*Mr. MORTON did not think the British soldier should have to depend on charity for his breakfast, it was a scandal and a shame that any such course should have to be adopted. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had given his promise to reconsider this question, because he did not want to go into the Lobby with the odds and ends of the late Tory Government. A substantial breakfast could not be had for the sum of three halfpence.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

And, it being after One of the Clock, Mr. Deputy Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Five o'clock a.m.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 28th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Epsom and Ewell Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

London United Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Great North of Scotland Railway Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP A).

Mr. Harold Tennant reported from the Committee on Group A of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had further adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Dean Forest Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Dean Forest Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Crown Lands Bill. Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Crown Lands Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. McKenna.*)

Midland Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 3).

Mr. Charles Allen reported from the Committee on Group 3 of Railway Bills; That, for the conveience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 4th April, at Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Bacup Corporation Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of law: from Adderbury (two); Ardwick; Axbridge; Badgeworth; Bath; Beaconsfield; Beckingham; Berrick; Bircle (two); Birkenhead; Bolton; Brent Knoll; Brettenham; Bridestowe; Brockley Hill (two); Bulley; Burnham; Burnley; Burrington; Bylaugh (two); Charnock Richard (three); Chorlton on Medlock; Clayton le Woods; Darwen; Disserth (two); Duntisbourne Abbots (two); Easterton; East Walton; Eccleston (two); Esh; Farington (two); Fence (two); Foxcote; Fritton; Gainsborough; Great Cheverell; Great Harwood; Greetham (two); Grimoldby; Harpsden; Hartburn; Harwood (two); Hellifield (two); Heskin Pemberton; Higher Walton (two); Holbrook; Hoole; Horsted Keynes (two); Hulme (three); Hurst Green; King's Langley; Lambley; Leverington; Lewisham; Little Gransden; London; Longhope; Long Wittenham; Manby; Manchester; Markbeech (two); Mawdesley (three); Mitford; Monkton Combe (two); Muston; Norton; Oddington; Orston; Oswaldkirk; Ovingham; Ovington; Plympton St. Maurice (two); Ponteland; Preston; Prittlewell (two); Reymerston; Ringley (two); Rockfield; Rushford; Sowerby (two); Standish; Staunton; Stow Longa with Easton; Stretham with Thetford (two); Thorpe; Turton; Twineham; Walmsley; Walton; Walton le Dale (three); West Hoathly; Weston; Weston super Mare; Whalley Mange; Whatley (two); Wheatenhurst; Whittle le Woods (two); Whitwell; Witchford; Woolston and Sholing; and Yockleton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (NAVY VOTES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th March, 1906, authorising the temporary application of surpluses on certain Navy Votes for the year 1905–6 to meet excesses on other Navy Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 95.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ARMY VOTES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 28th March, 1906, authorising the temporary application of surpluses on certain Army Votes for the year 1905–6 to defray excesses on other Army Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 96.]

COLONIES (GENERAL).

Copy presented, of Statement of Present Contributions to the Imperial Institute made by the Government of India and by the British Colonies and Protectorates [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSIONS (NETHER WALLSTEAD).

Copy presented, of Report by Captain M. B. Lloyd, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at Nether Wallstead, near Hayward's Heath, Sussex, on the 26th October, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) RETURNS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for the year 1904–5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th March; *Mr. Nannetti*]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).

Order [6th March] for an Address for a Return relative to Colonies (Colonial Acts, Royal Assent, read, and discharged; and, instead thereof:—

COLONIES (COLONIAL ACTS, ROYAL ASSENT).

Address for "Return of the names of Bills or Acts passed by both Houses of the Legislature in Colonies possessing responsible Government, since the date of the House of Commons' Return, No. 362, of 1901, which have not come into operation, either because His Majesty's Assent has not been given, or because the Acts have been disallowed."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Army Statistics.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the number of men in the Regular Army is likely to fall short of the number voted; and, if so, whether he can state approximately the probable deficiency.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am afraid that I cannot give my hon. friend any even approximate figures. It is not practicable to forecast the state of recruiting for anything but a very short period ahead, and it is difficult to calculate probable extensions, re-engagements, and wastage for the next twelve months.

S.S. "Cumbal"—Case of Hugh M'Garvie.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Hugh M'Garvie, an able seaman, was injured on board the s.s. "Cumbal," of London, on 19th April, 1905, whilst this vessel was at anchor in Punta Arenas, in the Straits of Magellan, in consequence of the ladder leading to the ship's hold being what is described as a dangerous ladder; and whether, seeing that on his return to the United Kingdom the sum of £4 18s. was deducted from his wages to defray the cost of his passage home, he will make inquiries into the matter and order the money to be refunded to M'Garvie.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) As this man was not shipped in the United Kingdom the owners of the vessel are not liable under Section 207 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, for the cost of his conveyance to this country. The expense, therefore, falls upon the man's wages, and I regret that I am unable to order the refund of the money. It is proposed by the Merchant Shipping Bill now before the House to extend the liability of shipowners so as to cover cases of this kind.

German Bounties on Locomotives.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table the Report from the British Consul at Rome, wherein is stated the amount of the bounty or bonus paid by the German Government to German locomotive manufacturers on locomotives built in and exported from Germany.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer to a similar Question which I gave on Monday last.†

Servia.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will say whether any negotiations are proceeding with a view to the resumption of diplomatic relations with Servia.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Deck Loads—Negotiations with Maritime Powers.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether His Majesty's Government has entered into negotiations with the maritime Powers, with a view to the prevention of risks to officers, crews, and shipping from the carriage of deck loads or loose ballast, liable to shift in heavy weather, or to the regulation of such cargoes; and, if not, will such negotiations be initiated without delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Yes, Sir, a circular with regard to deck loads of timber was sent out in April last. Replies have not yet been received from France, Germany, or Sweden. The other Powers have sent replies, but do not appear inclined to act on the suggestions made to them. It has not been thought necessary to open negotiations with foreign Powers with regard to loose ballast, but careful regulations on the subject have been issued to Board of Trade surveyors, and a notice of warning has been sent to shipowners and masters.

Maidstone Prison—Neglect by Officers.

MR. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the case of an inmate of Coxheath Workhouse Infirmary named Smitherman, who died two days after being admitted from Maidstone Prison, where he contracted bed-sores and paralysis, as well as verminous disease; and whether he will take steps to secure an improvement in the methods of treating and discharging sick prisoners.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Prison Commissioners have already made inquiry into this case, and they report to me that there was carelessness on the part of the prison officers in not sooner discovering the presence of vermin in the prisoner's hair, and in not reporting its condition to the medical officer of the infirmary to which the prisoner was removed on discharge from gaol. The Commissioners inform me that they are making further inquiry into this point. Apart from this, all proper care was taken of the man; he was attended day and night, and the medical officer visited him daily.

Cusack (Longford) Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any decision has yet been come to by the Estates Commissioners as to the report of the inspector on the Cusack (county Longford) Estate; and can he say how much untenanted land the inspector found on his visit.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they hope shortly to make an offer to the Land Judge for the purchase of this estate. There appears to be no untenanted land on the estate, but there are five holdings comprising about 170 acres, which are held by tenants under court lettings. The Commissioners propose to make an offer to purchase these land as untenanted lands.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 817.

Sir John Nugent Humble's Estate.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what date an originating application for the sale of a portion of the estate of Sir John Nugent Humble, in the county of Waterford, was lodged with the Estates Commissioners; whether he is aware that there is a large area of untenanted land on the estate which the owner does not propose to sell; that a clearance of many tenants off this estate was effected about fifty years ago, and that several tenants were also evicted within the past twenty-five years; and whether, seeing that a portion of the lands more recently evicted was sold by Sir John Nugent Humble to his brother some years before the passing of the Act of 1903, and that a legal question arose at the time as to the right of the owner to sell to his brother in consideration of money to be advanced by the State, and that the greater portion of the more recently evicted land is now unavailable for the reinstatement of the evicted tenants, the Estates Commissioners will decline to deem the lands, the sale of which to existing tenants is now proposed, to be an estate unless the owner also consents to sell to the Commissioners, with a view to distribution to the evicted tenants, a sufficient portion of the lands from which tenants, whose families have since disappeared, were cleared about fifty years ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the originating application in respect of the sale of a portion of the estate of Sir John Nugent Humble was lodged with them on the 14th September, 1905. The case has not yet been dealt with by the Commissioners, but they inform me that they will consider the matters referred to in the Question when dealing with the estate.

Loans to Tenant Purchasers.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that difficulties have arisen as to making loans applied for to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, in consequence of tenants having signed agreements to purchase their holdings under the Land Act of 1903, and pending the completion of such purchase, the issue of loans is delayed, inasmuch as the statutes relating to loans to owners of land are not the same as those relating to loans to tenants; and whether, seeing that the Commissioners of Public Works decline, while purchase is pending, to treat applicants for loans as either tenants or owners, and delays in connection with purchase are occurring, he will take steps to introduce legislation to deal with the matter..

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Loans to tenants purchasing under the Act of 1903 are not delayed by the Board of Works pending completion of sale, provided the tenants can produce receipts for rent showing that, in the event of the sale from any cause falling through, they would not be liable for more than twelve months rent, an arrear of a year's rent being a barrier to a tenant's loan. Purchasing tenants cannot be treated as owners until the fee simple of their holdings has been legally transferred to them by the issue of the Land Commission vesting order. I do not think it advisable, in the interests of the security for Government advances, that any further concession should be made.

Ballydecane Evicted Tenant.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an application has been received by the Estates Commissioners from Miss Helena Maye in reference to a farm at Ballydecane, county Waterford, from which her father was evicted; whether he is aware that the evicted farm is now in the possession of two new tenants, one occupying about 250 acres and the other about thirty acres, and that besides these two new tenants there is only one other tenant on thet estate, viz., Miss Carroll, except that one of the new tenants is also in occupation of another holding; whether he is aware that, the new tenants having entered into negotiations for purchase with the owner, Miss Carroll declined to have anything to do with the same unless the evicted tenant's claim was satisfied; whether an originating application has been lodged with the Estates Commissioners by the owner; and whether the Estates Commissioners will allow the evicted tenant to be passed over, and declare these two holdings and one other to be an estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that an application for reinstatement has been lodged with them by Miss Helena Maye, who claims as the representative of an evicted tenant on the estate of Miss H. P. Rice and others. The application alleges that the eviction took place in 1881 out of a farm of 315 acres, which is now in the occupation of James Ellis and David Barry, and that the eviction was for non-payment of £853 rent due. The Commissioners have no knowledge of any negotiations for purchase which may be proceeding. No application in respect of the sale of the estate has been lodged with them.

Cappawhite Police Transport Car.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the police transport car at Cappawhite, county Tipperary, has been used by the local district inspector of constabulary for his own private convenience; that on the 20th and 23rd of November, 1905, and 3rd of January, 1906, one sack of flour, one sack of meal, and one sack of flour, were conveyed by the transport car from Dundrum railway station, a distance of nearly seven miles, where they were purchased for the district inspector from Sutton and Company; whether he is aware that Sutton and Company have agents at the railway stations whose books can verify such purchases; and whether, seeing that this car has also been used by the local head constable for the purpose of conveying his son to and from a technical school at the town of Tipperary, eight miles distant, that it was brought to Cappawhite a few years ago when the people were agitating for the abolition of the grazing system on the Dundrum Estate, which is now being sold to the Estates Commissioners he will give instructions to have the car removed from the locality.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Inspector-General who has inquired into this matter, informs me that the only foundation for the allegation as regards the district inspector consists in the fact that on one or two occasions, when the transport car was at Dundrum on duty, the district inspector had a small quantity of flour brought back in it for his own use. On other occasions bran and meal for the use of the transport horse has been conveyed from Dundrum by the car. It is not the case that the car has been used by the head constable for the purpose named in the Question or any other private purpose. The Inspector-General considers that the transport car is still required at Cappawhite. The Dundrum Estate has been offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners, but they have not yet decided whether they will make an offer to purchase it.

Irish Government Dredger—Ballyness Harbour

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how the dredger, purchased with part of the Irish Development Grant, has been employed; and whether it will soon be available for use at Ballyness Harbour, county Donegal.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Board of Works that the dredger "Sisyphus" made her trial trip at Fenit on 4th March, 1905, and was then employed at Fenit Harbour from 6th March to 5th September. In pursuance of contract with the builders the dredger then went to Limerick for opening up and examination. On 2nd

October she proceeded to Galway, and her engagement there will terminate on 30th April, 1906. After an inspection at Limerick the dredger will proceed to Dingle on a three months engagement; and it is proposed that she shall work at harbours on the south coast for the remainder of the present working season. No application has been made to the Board of Works for the use of the dredger at Ballyness Harbour, and the Board are not at present aware whether the place or the work to be done would be suitable for the "Sisyphus."

Dunfanaghy Lunacy Certificate Fee.

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say why the Lord Chancellor has refused to refund to the guardians of the Dunfanaghy union the fee paid by them to the medical officer who certified on the occasion of the committal of Mrs. Grace Ronayne to Letterkenny Asylum on the 30th November, 1904, although he has promised to pay for her maintenance in the asylum.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Registrar in Lunacy in Ireland that, as the fee of the medical officer in this case is not recoverable by law, the Lord Chancellor has no power to authorise payment.

Native Reservations in Natal.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what lands are reserved for natives in Natal; whether these lands are under the control of the Crown; whether any portion of these reservations has been confiscated recently, and, if so, from what tribes; and what action he intends taking to protect the natives against encroachments upon the lands reserved for them.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has received the following information by telegram from the Governor of Natal:—"Gobizembe has been fined 1,200 cattle and 3,500 sheep and goats. Land on which Gobizembe's tribe resides belongs to and is administered by Natal Native Trust. Portion of this, with the natives residing thereon, has been placed under authority of two adjoining chiefs. Gobizembe is to be deposed and the remainder of location will for the time being be administered by magistrate. Gobizembe has no legal title to the land in question, and is merely allowed by the Natal Native Trust to locate his tribe thereon during good behaviour. The fine was inflicted by the officer commanding Militia, under authority of martial law and with approval of civil authorities. The punishment which has been inflicted on this chief was in consequence serious acts of defiance towards the magistrate on the part of large section of his tribe and the failure of Gobizembe to comply with orders of supreme chief, as communicated to him by the officer commanding Militia, to deliver up offenders to the authorities." The hon. Member will observe that this answers, in anticipation, a Question which he has put down on the Paper for to-morrow.† I should add, in answer to the hon. Member's first Question, that the total area set apart for natives in Natal is over 2,000,000 acres, distributed among forty-two locations, and is vested in the Natal Native Trust, of which the Governor and Executive Council of the Colony are the trustees. It would appear that the measures taken by the Natal Government are entirely within its competence, but the Secretary of State awaits more ample information by mail.

Native Rising in Natal.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any information regarding the native rising in Natal; and what precautions have been taken for the safety of the white population in that colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State has received the following telegram from the Governor of Natal, dated yesterday:—"Although certain tribes are still giving trouble and general situation far from satisfactory, Government hope to be able to demobilise Mackenzie's column by the end of week, and to deal with outstanding recalcitrants by Police Field Force only. General Officer Commanding in South Africa agrees to leave 2nd Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in Pietermaritzburg for the present." The Natal Government are evidently satisfied that the precautions which they are able to take by means of their Police Field Force will now be sufficient.

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†MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has official information showing that the Native chief Gobizembe, head of one of the Natalian tribes, has been fined 1,200 head of cattle and 3,500 sheep, and a portion of his land confiscated; and, if so, whether this action was taken by the military or civil authorities of Natal; and whether a Report of the proceedings has been sent to the Colonial Office; and, if so, what justification is offered for such proceedings.

Pembroke Dockyard Discharges.

MR. PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if he can state whether the 200 men, who are to be discharged at Pembroke Dockyard during April and May, will complete the number of men to be discharged from Pembroke Dockyard during the financial year ending 31st March, 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is anticipated that no further reduction, other than that due to natural wastage, will be necessary during the ensuing financial year.

Sheers in Royal Dockyards.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PHILIPPS (Southampton): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty contemplate erecting a new set of sheers at one of the Royal dockyards; and, if so, whether the contract for the same will be submitted for public tender.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) It is not in contemplation to erect new sheers at any of the Home dockyards. A new set of 100-ton sheers has been ordered for Gibraltar Yard, and will shortly be erected there. It is proposed to erect a set of 100-ton sheers at the Hong-Kong Yard extension, and to invite tenders for the supply and erection of these sheers from firms on the Admiralty list, *i.e.*, from those who are fully competent to carry out such a contract.

Case of James McCann.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the conviction and sentence to three years penal servitude of James McCann at the recent spring assizes for county Longford; whether he is aware that McCann's conviction was secured on the uncorroborated testimony of the injured man, although it was proved that McCann was at his own house at the time of the occurrence; and whether he will call for a report of the whole case with a view to a revision of the sentence.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Attorney-General for Ireland has no power to revise sentences passed by Judges of Assize after conviction of prisoners by jurors; nor can he in any way rescind or alter the verdicts given. In the case referred to, I am informed that a memorial has been presented to the Lord-Lieutenant, on behalf of the prisoner, praying for a remission of the sentence, and His Excellency will, the hon. Member may be assured, give it his careful attention.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court in Ireland

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he will grant a Return of the number of cases within the last twenty years in which persons were imprisoned or fined in Ireland for contempt of court.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) Successive Returns have been laid before Parliament giving full particulars of cases in which persons have been committed to prison for contempt of court in Ireland during the past twenty years. The last of these Returns, which brought the proceedings down to 31st December, 1904, bears the number 138 of last session. My right hon. friend will have no objection to grant a Return in continuation down to 31st December, 1905, if the hon. Member should move for it.

Longford Post Office.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is yet in a position to discontinue the experiment of closing Longford Post Office at 8 instead of 9 o'clock p.m.; and, seeing that this order practically reduces the county town of Longford to the postal level of a country village, and in view of the indignation locally aroused over the matter, will he direct the removal of this order.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As I pointed out to the hon. Member, in reply to his Question of the 21st of February†, the usual hour of closing post offices in towns of about the size of Longford is 8 p.m. The experiment of closing the Longford office at that hour has not yet been in force sufficiently long to enable me to come to a decision as to whether or not the arrangement should be made permanent.

Tristan da Cunha Mails.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool); To ask the Postmaster-General whether in future, when it is decided to forward mails to Tristan da Cunha by a ship which does not call at Cape Town, he will acquaint the postal authorities of the Cape Colony by telegraph of the fact, and thus enable letters posted in that colony to reach this country before the ship sails.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Inquiry should be made of the Cape post office whether such communication is desirable supposing that time permits.

Fruit Industry—Consolidation of Acts.

Mr. NAPIER (Kent, Faversham): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Government is prepared to give effect to the recommendations of the recent Departmental Committee on the fruit industry to the effect that the various Agricultural Holdings Acts should be consolidated into one Act, and that the Market Gardeners' Compensation Acts be amended by making Section 4 retrospective.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) There can be no doubt as to the desirability of consolidating the Agricultural Holdings Acts, and I should be glad if an opportunity could be found for doing so in connection with the Land Tenure Bill now before the House. The suggestion of the hon. Member will certainly be kept in view. A Bill for amending the Market Gardeners' Compensation Act is now before the House, and I am afraid that, under existing circumstances, I cannot undertake that the Government will introduce legislation of their own on the subject.

Horticultural Instruction in Elementary Schools.

Mr. NAPIER: To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has considered the recent recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the fruit industry that horticulture should be taught in elementary schools in country districts, and that such schools should have school gardens attached thereto wherever possible, and also the further recommendation of the same Committee that the attention of the local education committees should be called to the above recommendation, and also to the desirability of encouraging the study of practical horticulture in training colleges; and if he is prepared to take action on either of such recommendations.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Board give special grants for cottage gardening. These grants are taken considerable and increasing advantage of, in spite of the difficulties in the way of obtaining suitable teachers and gardens. Some county councils are providing excellent classes for the instruction of the existing teaching staffs of rural elementary schools in these subjects. The subject may be taken as part of a training college course, and is, in fact, so taken in one or two colleges, where the surroundings and conditions are favourable.

Publication of Railway Companies' Running Powers.

Mr. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will take steps to prevail upon the railway companies to publish their running powers in the same way as they were formerly published by Mr. Airey in his book of junction diagrams, so that the public may know the exact running powers of the various railway companies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 358.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board of Trade have no authority which would enable them to require the railway companies to give the information desired, but I will bring my hon. friend's suggestion to their attention.

Hallmarking of Foreign Silver.

Mr. GIBB (Middlesex, Harrow): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the generally recognised mark of the lion, as denoting silver of a certain standard, he will consider the advisability of restoring the right of foreign manufactured plate of the standard quality to be stamped with the lion, together with a distinctive word, such as imported or foreign, to denote that the article is of foreign manufacture, and so get rid of the protection afforded by the Order in Council, made the 24th October, 1904, to the home-made acticle, by the exclusive right to the use of the lion mark.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Under the Hallmarking of Foreign Plate Act, 1904, foreign plate brought to an assay office in the United Kingdom has to be so marked as to readily distinguish such plate from plate wrought or made within the Kingdom. In fixing the marks to be adopted by the different assay offices, regard was had to the fact that it is impracticable to stamp such words as those suggested by my hon. friend on small wares. The standard value of silver plate is indicated by numerals stamped thereon, and is easily recognisable.

Mortality in Prisons.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the rate of mortality in local prisons and in convict prisons in England and Wales during each of the past ten years, and the number of floggings inflicted as gaol punishment in England and Wales during each of the past ten years

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The death rate from natural causes in local and convict prisons during the ten years ended the 31st March, 1905, was as follows:—

Year ended 31st March.	In Local Prisons. — Deaths per 1,000 of the average prison population.	In Convict Prisons. — Deaths per 1,000 of the average prison population.
1896 - - - -	6·3	8·0
1897 - - - -	7·4	9·7
1898 - - - -	5·6	6·7
1899 - - - -	5·9	9·1
1900 - - - -	8·2	11·8
1901 - - - -	6·0	10·7
1902 - - - -	6·8	7·0
1903 - - - -	5·4	8·9
1904 - - - -	5·3	3·9
1905 - - - -	5·3	7·2

The number of corporal punishments in local and convict prisons for prison offences during each of the ten years ended the 31st March, 1905, was as follows:—

Year ended 31st March.	In Local Prisons.	In Convict Prisons.
1896 - -	95	14
1897 - -	112	19
1898 - -	50	7
1899 - -	44	3
1900 - -	17	12
1901 - -	23	19
1902 - -	25	21
1903 - -	27	20
1904 - -	25	15
1905 - -	15	8

Vaccination Exemption Certificates.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that upon an application by a parent, under the Vaccination Act, 1898, for a certificate of exemption from vaccination for his child, it is the practice of clerks to justices to require production of a full copy of the certificate of birth of the child, for which under the Registration Act, 1874, a fee of 2s. 6d. has to be paid, and not to accept the certificate of registration prescribed by Section 30 of the Registration Act, 1874, for which a sum not exceeding 3d. is to be paid; and whether, having regard to the fact that the latter certificate equally proves the essential fact of the date of birth, it is within his powers to give instructions that the certificate under Section 30 of the Act shall be accepted as sufficient evidence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have no power to prescribe the evidence which is to be received by a court of justice, but it appears to have been held by the High Court that justices are entitled to require a certificate of birth, unless some reason is shown why it cannot be given.

Saturday Half-Holidays for Government Officials.

MR. SHEEHAN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will take the necessary steps to have the Order in Council, dated 15th August, 1890, which provided that officers employed in Government offices should be allowed a half-holiday on alternate Saturdays, so varied as to extend the privilege of the half-holiday to every Saturday on condition that the time is made up by increasing the working hours on other days of the week.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am not sure that the change would be acceptable to the public departments generally, or that their arrangements would permit of its introduction, but I will give further consideration to the subject.

New Government Offices in Parliament Street.

COLONEL LEGGE: To ask the First Commissioner of Works how many workmen are at present employed on the new Government offices at the corner of Great George Street and Parliament Street, and when the buildings will be completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) The number of the men employed on the building is 255; at the masons' yard ninety-six, and forty-two joiners at the builders' workshops. There are also a number of carvers. It is anticipated that the buildings will be completed towards the end of 1907.

Extension of the National Gallery.

MR. NAPIER: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government is able to hold out the hope that the extension of the National Gallery asked for by the trustees of that gallery, and long promised, will be provided for in the Estimates for the coming financial year, and will be forthwith commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) His Majesty's Government regrets that there is no prospect of this extension being carried out in the approaching financial year, as it has not been possible to make provision for it in the Estimates. The question will be further considered in the course of the ensuing financial year.

Mortality in Indian Prisons.

Sir H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the rate of mortality in prisons in India during each of the past ten years, and the number of floggings inflicted as gaol punishment in India during each of the past ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The following are the figures asked for :—

	Rate of Mortality per mille of Average Strength.	Total Number of Corporal Punishments in Gaols.
1895 - - - -	26·59	1,580
1896 - - - -	27·79	1,753
1897 - - - -	39·64	1,634
1898 - - - -	25·3	1,691
1899 - - - -	21·86	1,686
1900 - - - -	33·46	1,511
1901 - - - -	25·28	1,364
1902 - - - -	22·46	1,315
1903 - - - -	19·52	1,100
1904 - - - -	17·75	1,076

South African War Fund—Claim of John Norris.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he will recommend to the favourable consideration of the Commander-in-Chief's Fund (South African War) the claim of John Norris, of Crosshea, county Longford, for a small grant, seeing that his only support was his son, who was killed in South Africa.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) A sum of £2 has been granted to this man from the South African War Fund.

Volunteer Medical Service.

Mr. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed to take any steps to give an effective organisation to the Volunteer Medical Service, with the view of rendering it efficient as a department of the Volunteers, and of bringing it as a whole in close connection with the Army Medical Service; and whether it is intended to give any public recognition for the services of regimental Volunteer medical officers as recommended by the War Office Departmental Committee in 1886.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The whole question is under consideration, and the opinions of individual medical officers and associations are being collected on the subject.

Officers' Lodging Allowances.

Lord J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers residing in their private houses and not drawing lodging allowances are obliged to pay for the hire of furniture in the hutment quarters at Crown Hill, Plymouth, until another unit takes over these quarters.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Officers who, with the consent of their commanding officers, reside in private houses when quarters are available for them in barracks, and thus forego their lodging money, would have to pay the usual rent deduction of 1d. a day, if they are allotted, and make use of a furnished quarter in barracks; but if they do not require to use such quarter, there is nothing to prevent their handing it over to the officer in charge of the barrack concerned. There is no information at the War Office in regard to the special case mentioned.

LORD J. JOICEY-CECIL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers to whom quarters have been allotted are compelled to pay for furniture hire, whether they occupy them or not, until they are taken over by some other officer.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Officers, so long as they have a furnished quarter on their charge, have to pay a continuous rental of 1d. a day.

Volunteer Colonels.

MR. HILLS (Durham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is his intention to appoint Volunteer colonels to command Volunteer infantry brigades; and, if so, how many such appointments will be made, and what the War Office will require of the officers so appointed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am not at present able to give the full information required by the Question, except that it is intended in some cases to appoint Volunteer colonels.

Judge Advocate General.

MR. PAUL (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for War by what legal authority Mr. Milvain holds a permanent salaried office as Judge Advocate General.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Judge Advocate General was appointed by the Secretary of State for War, to whom he is empowered to give advice on all legal questions referred to him.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Railways in Northern Nigeria.

MR. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government have taken into consideration the repeated recommendations of the High Commissioner for Northern Nigeria, that a railway should be constructed without delay from a port on the Niger to Zaria and Kano; whether they have considered the Report forwarded by the Crown agents, in which the confident expectation is held out that such a railway would be financially self-supporting; and whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any action in the matter.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State is fully alive to the importance of developing the means of transport in Northern Nigeria, but many important questions have to be considered before a decision can be arrived at, and he is not in a position to say whether any action will be taken in regard to the particular schemes referred to by the hon. Member.

Ceylon Duty on Indian Tea.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can hold out any prospect of the abolition of the import duty levied in Ceylon upon Indian tea.

*MR. CHURCHILL: The Question of abolishing this duty was considered by the Ceylon Government last year, but they decided to make no change in view of the opposition on the part of the local Planters' Association and Chamber of Commerce to its removal. The Colonial Government will, however, be invited to give the matter further consideration.

Threat to close Johannesburg Mines.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a resolution has been received at the Colonial Office from the trades council of Johannesburg, in reference to the alleged threat of some mineowners to close down the mines and suspend construction work, with a view to accentuating the existing distress in that locality; whether this resolution states that such action is attributable to a desire on the part of the mineowners to force the hand of the Imperial Government on the question of Chinese labour; and, if so, what action the Colonial office intend to take.

*Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has not yet received any such resolution. From information which has reached him he understands that the principal mining houses do not contemplate any policy so ill-advised as to close down mines with a view to accentuating distress; but that on the contrary it has been decided to continue the development work now going on until a dearth of un skilled labour makes itself actually felt.

Mr. FLYNN: If the Colonial Office receives any representation or resolution of this nature will it be communicated to the House?

*Mr. CHURCHILL: If they receive any communication of that character it will be for the Government to consider it, but I am not aware that there is any call to communicate it to the House unless some specific request is made.

Tabah.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Turkish troops are still in occupation of Tabah; and if he can give any information as to the progress of the negotiations with the Sublime Porte on this matter.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury) (for Sir Edward Grey): The Turkish troops are still in occupation of Tabah. Negotiations on the subject are still proceeding with the Sublime Porte, but I am unable at present to give any further information.

Baghdad Railway.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has information regarding the progress of the Baghdad railway project which may be communicated to the House.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The first section of the railway from Konia to Eregli was open to traffic in October, 1904; we have no further information as to progress made with it.

Great Northern Railway—Superannuation Society.

Mr. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the action of the Great Northern Railway Company in reducing the superannuation allowance to their employees; and whether he will consider the advisability of appointing a Select Committee to inquire into the operation of all the compulsory societies attached to railway employment.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): My attention has not been previously called to this matter as regards the particular railway company mentioned by my hon. friend, but if he will furnish me with any particulars I will consider them. As I informed the hon. Member for Stockport on Thursday last,[†] I propose to discuss with the authorities of the House, whether any useful purpose would be served by the appointment of a Committee as suggested.

Roumanian Tariff.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will explain why, in the official communication to the effect that reductions on the new general tariff of Roumania had been obtained by the United Kingdom in respect to various articles, no information was given to British traders of the fact that the new conventional duties on those articles are in nearly every case higher than the old conventional duties; and whether he will take steps to acquaint British traders with the actual changes in the new as compared with the old conventional duties which have taken place.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The object of the notice referred to by the hon. Member was to state what concessions had been obtained by negotiations with Roumania as compared with the new general tariff rates. A comparison of the new general Roumanian tariff with the old tariff rates was circulated to Chambers of Commerce by the Board of Trade some time previously. When the new conventional tariff assumes its final shape by the completion of the new series of Roumanian treaties, it is proposed to publish a comparative return on the lines of Cd. 2414 of 1905 relating to the German tariff.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 626.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: When does the right hon. Gentleman expect the return will be ready—by Easter?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I cannot say at present.

London and North Western Railway Night Clerical Staff.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the hours worked by the night clerical staff on all parts of the London and North Western Railway; if he will call for a Return for the months of November and December, 1905, and of March, 1906; and if he proposes to give clerks the opportunity for complaint under the Hours Act, 1893.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Board of Trade have no power which would enable them to call for a Return, such as that suggested, and persons employed in clerical work are explicitly excluded from the operation of the Railway Regulation Act, 1893.

Work for the London Unemployed.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board to what number of unemployed work is now being provided by Government Departments in the metropolis; and if he will state the number of men thus employed by different departments, respectively.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The number of men who are employed by the Central Unemployed Body for London on work provided by the Government is 187. The work is provided by His Majesty's Office of Works.

Grove Park Workhouse.

MR. BARKER (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that the Greenwich Board of Guardians held an inquiry into alleged irregularities in the consumption of stores by outside officers at the Grove Park Workhouse, on the statements of the assistant cook, and that such charges were held to be true; if he is aware that the assistant cook was dismissed by being called upon to resign in consequence and that the two engineers implicated had their wages subsequently raised, and that the Local Government Board refused to sanction the increases; that, despite this refusal, the guardians are paying the increases out of the local rates, and that these two officers are related to members of the Greenwich Board of Guardians; and will he state what steps the Local Government Board propose taking in order to ensure their decision being adopted.

MR. JOHN BURNS: It is the fact that the Local Government Board have recently declined to sanction an increase in the salaries of the engineer and assistant engineer at the Grove Park Workhouse; but I have no information on the other matters referred to in the Question. I will make inquiry on the subject.

Foreign Money Orders.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the rate for money orders to be sent abroad is at the entire discretion of the British postal authorities; and, if so, whether he can put the United Kingdom on the same scale for sending post office orders abroad as other countries charge for remitting to the United Kingdom.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The uniform rates of commission for all money orders sent abroad are fixed by Treasury regulations, and correspond to the estimated cost of the service. They are generally more favourable to the remitter in this country than the rates which most foreign post offices charge for orders issued on this country.

Statute Law Revision.

*MR. RADFORD (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, since the publication of the last volume of the revised edition of the statutes in 1900, statutes and parts of statutes covering more than 1,000 pages in such edition have been repealed, and that more than 1,200 short titles have been given to existing statutes; and whether it is intended forthwith to publish a new edition, omitting the repealed enactments, adding the short titles to the existing statutes, and otherwise revised up to the present date.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): I will bring the hon. Member's suggestion under the consideration of the Statute Law Revision Committee, within whose province the matter rests. I understand that a new volume, bringing the present edition of the revised statutes up to 1900, is now in hand, and that the Committee do not consider that the time has quite arrived for the commencement of a fresh revision.

Bradford Education Dispute.

Mr. NUSSEY (Pontefract): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Morley Division of Yorks, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the Bradford City Council, acting in the capacity of education authority, has repeatedly refused to pay the advance in salary due to the officials in the education office according to the scale under which they were engaged by the late School Board; and whether he proposes to take any action under the Defaulting Authorities Act or otherwise.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): I am aware of the facts stated in the Question. The total increase amounts to about £250 yearly. As this is a question between the Bradford Education Authority and its staff, the matter may safely be left to the decision of the City Council and its legal advisers. I do not for one moment believe the City Council will fail to fulfil any agreement entered into by themselves or to meet any obligation inherited by them from their predecessors.

Education Bill.

Sir HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): To ask the President of the Board of Education, if the Education Bill will be introduced before the Easter recess.

Mr. BIRRELL: I am not without some hope of introducing the Bill before Easter.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman fix the date approximately?

Mr. BIRRELL: I do not think I can fix the day, but the hon. Member will see that if at all it must be just before Easter.

St. Mark's Infant School, Horsham.

Mr. RIDSDALE (Brighton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if his attention has been called to the dismissal of Miss Gardner, the head mistress of St. Mark's Infant School at Horsham, a school recently under the education authority, on the ground of her being a Nonconformist; and whether, in view of the circumstances of the case, steps will be taken to provide the dismissed teacher at the earliest opportunity with another appointment of similar value.

Mr. BIRRELL: My attention has been drawn to a newspaper cutting which purports to give the facts of this case. The actual situation appears to be as follows. This school was originally a Church of England School, but was leased to the local authority in 1889. The trustees of the school have now given notice to terminate the lease on June 13th next, and have given the statutory notice of their desire to re-establish it as a voluntary school. The local authority raise no objection to the proposal which cannot, at the earliest, be considered by the Board until after the expiration of the statutory notice on June 1st. I gather that the trustees have been approached as to their willingness to take over the existing staff of the school. The trustees have not apparently, as yet, come to any decision, but they seem to have a difficulty in employing as head mistress of a Church of England school the present head mistress, Miss Gardner, who is a Nonconformist. I have no power to force the trustees to appoint Miss Gardner in the event of the school becoming a Church of England school, or to provide her with a fresh appointment elsewhere.

Scottish Education Code.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland under what statutory or other authorities the Scotch Education Department issued the code of regulations for day schools in 1905, and the draft regulations for the preliminary education, training and certification of teachers for various grades of schools in 1906, the names of titles and dates of such statutes or other authorities.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): The authorities desired by the hon. Member are:—An Order in Council of April 10th, 1839, and the following statutes:—19 and 20 Vict., cap. 116; 35 and 36 Vict., cap. 62; 48 and 49 Vict. cap. 61.

Scottish Fishery Board.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the scientific member of the Scottish Fishery Board is paid a salary; and, if so, how much.

Mr. SINCLAIR: He is paid no salary as scientific member of the Fishery Board.

Cork Registrar of Titles.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he will consider the propriety of testing the validity of the appointment of Mr. Wright as registrar of titles in the County of Cork, by proceedings in the High Court of Justice, before moving the Second Reading of the Local Registration of Titles (Ireland) Bill.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): It is extremely undesirable in the public interest to delay the passing of the Bill now before the House by any proceedings such as are suggested in the Question, inasmuch as the Government are advised that Mr. Wright was not clerk of the Crown and Peace for the county of Cork so as to be capable of being appointed registrar of titles for the county of Cork under Section 4 of the Act of 1891 (Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act).

Sir EDWARD CARSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Wright has been advised by very eminent counsel in Ireland that he is properly appointed?

Mr. CHERRY: I am not aware of it.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: In view of it will you reconsider your decision?

Mr. CHERRY: I am afraid it is impossible for me to do that.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he will place upon the Table of the House the terms of appointment of Mr. Wright as registrar of titles, and any correspondence which has passed between him and the Lord Chancellor of Ireland or the Chief Secretary's Department with reference to such appointment.

Mr. CHERRY: As the right hon. Gentleman is aware, a Bill has been introduced dealing with the local registration of title in the county of Cork, and I propose on the Second Reading of the Bill to state the terms of Mr. Wright's appointment, which the Government have been advised is invalid under the existing law. I propose also to refer to the correspondence which has passed on the subject. I shall be very glad to show these documents to the right hon. Gentleman at any time he wishes, but I do not think it necessary to place them upon the Table of the House.

Sir EDWARD CARSON: How are Members of the House who are not acquainted with this document to form an opinion as to the legality of this gentleman's appointment unless they see the document?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it the same as the Dudley correspondence?

[Mr. Cherry's Answer was inaudible.]

Irish Land Act Administration—Crown Protection for the Sheriff.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when a landlord proposes to sell his interest to his tenants and they, deeming the price too high, offer to buy at such price as the Estates Commissioners find the respective holdings on inspection to be worth, and the landlord declines this offer and proceeds for the recovery of the rents, upon which his proposed prices were based, will the forces of the Crown be at his service in this enterprise.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): It is not competent to the Executive Government to refuse the assistance of the forces of the Crown for the protection of the Sheriff when engaged in the execution of the King's writ.

Landlords and Embarrassed Tenants.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to the recent dicta of the Land Judge in Ireland that he, the Land Judge, had always found Irish tenants most reasonable, and that embarrassed tenants were not free agents when signing purchase agreements; and if he will have a record kept of landlords who have demanded high prices from embarrassed tenants and afterwards proceeded against those tenants for the recovery of the rents upon which those prices were calculated.

MR. BRYCE: My attention has been drawn to newspaper reports of the Land Judge's remarks to the effect mentioned in the Question. I am not aware that any good purpose would be served by keeping such a record as is referred to in the latter part of the Question, and in any event, apart from the difficulty of deciding what are high prices, I have no means of obtaining the necessary information.

Refusals and Advances.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in cases in which landlords submit to the Estates Commissioners purchase agreements purporting to have been signed by tenants, and the Commissioners hold that the prices are excessive, and on that ground refuse to advance the sum asked, do they communicate their decision with the grounds of it to the tenants who are principal parties in the matter; and, if not, will he take steps to have every such decision, with the grounds of it, communicated directly to every tenant whom it affects.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that in cases in which they may refuse to sanction the advances applied for, whether on the grounds of security or otherwise, it has been their practice to notify to the solicitor having carriage of the sales that such advances have been refused. The Commissioners assume that such notification is communicated by the solicitor to the tenant concerned, but they inform me that they will consider the desirability of directly notifying the tenant of their decision in such cases.

Police in County Clare.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of extra police in the county of Clare, and the parishes in which they are stationed, and why they are stationed there; will he say whether the ratepayers are paying for these extra police; and, if so, will he remove them, in view of the statement of the Lord Chief Justice for Ireland, at the last assizes for the county of Clare, held at Ennis, that the county was in a peaceful state.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that no extra police force is stationed in the county of Clare.

Maynooth College.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount of endowment received under the Irish Church Act, out of the confiscated church funds, in connection with Maynooth College, the amounts due for building to the Board of Works, which was cancelled by the same Act, the allocation of the annual income, the names of all persons paid and their amounts; and what amount, if any, was expended on pensions, the number of students, and the amount of total fees paid by them, together with the amounts of bursaries payable to students.

MR. BRYCE: The annual endowment received by the Maynooth College out of the Consolidated Fund was extinguished under Section 40 of the Irish Church Act, 1869, by the payment of a capital sum of £372,331 out of the Church Fund. This capital sum consisted of fourteen times the amount of the annual sum paid to the

Trustees of the College in the year ending March 31st, 1869. The amount of the outstanding loan for building due to the Board of Works, which was remitted under the same Act, was £15,857 9s. 2d. I have no information which would enable me to answer the remainder of the Question.

Contempt of Court—Case of Mr. Thomas Smith, Justice of the Peace.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor will be called to the fact that an attachment has been issued against Mr. Thomas Smith, Justice of the Peace, for contempt of Court in having taken part in an act of intimidation, with a view to the removal of this person's name from a Commission of the Peace.

MR. BRYCE: It is not the practice of the Government to call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to cases in which his jurisdiction as to magistrates is involved. If his jurisdiction is invoked, I have no doubt he will institute any such inquiries as he may think necessary, and exercise his discretion after he is satisfied as to the facts.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I presume the right hon. Gentleman is aware that this gentleman has been committed without having been heard in his own defence.

MR. BRYCE: I understand it is a committal for contempt of Court.

Dublin Corporation Auditor.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report of Mr. Drury, one of the auditors of the Local Government Board, on his audit of the accounts of the Corporation of Dublin for the year ended March, 1905; whether the auditor has surcharged the members of the corporation who voted an increase of £2,000 in the salary of the Lord Mayor; whether the borough fund is overdrawn to the extent of £10,000; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

MR. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have received Mr. Drury's report on his audit of the accounts of the Corporation of Dublin for the year ended March 31st, 1905. The answer to the second inquiry is in the negative. I am, however, informed that in consequence of a recent decision of the Court of King's Bench on the subject of the salaries of the Lord Mayor and his Secretary, the auditor felt constrained to make a surcharge amounting to £3,507 16s. 6d. against the treasurer of the City of Dublin in respect of the salaries paid during the year ended March 31st, 1905. The resolutions of the Council appointing these salaries, and of the Committee who authorised the payments in respect of them, were legal so far as they went, but the action of the Treasury in issuing the Paying Orders was technically wrong, having regard to the decision of the Court. In these circumstances the Local Government Board do not propose to enforce the surcharge. I am informed that the overdraft on the borough fund amounts at present to less than £3,000.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Who will have to bear the cost?

MR. BRYCE: I must ask for notice of that.

Irish Land Commission Staff.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he proposes to increase the staff of the Irish Land Commission, now officially announced to be seriously understaffed.

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware of the official announcement to which the hon. Member refers. The Question, however, of increasing the staff of the Estates Commissioners is under consideration.

Annesley and Downshire Estates.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many second-term rents have been fixed during the past twelve months by Sub-Commissioner M'Connell on the county Down estates of the Earl of Annesley and the Marquis of Downshire respectively, and the average per cent. reduction on each estate; whether he can state if the withdrawal by these landlords of the scale of voluntary reductions is traceable to the decisions of the lay Sub-Commissioner; and, if not, whether any other reason is assigned by the Chief Land Commission.

Mr. BRYCE: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in thinking that the assistant Commissioner named in the Question has himself judicially fixed rents. He is but one member of a Sub-Commission Court which fixes rents. I am informed by the Land Commission that they do not think it desirable to discuss the merits of the judicial decisions of Sub-Commission Courts. If any party to a case is dissatisfied with the decision, he has a remedy in the right of appeal conferred by statute.

Mr. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman has not said if landlords have withdrawn their scales of voluntary reductions in this district in consequence of the decisions of this Sub-Commissioner.

Mr. BRYCE: I am not informed on that point.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I have put that Question twice. I will put it again.

High Courts of Ireland—Appointments.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of appointments made by nomination and the number by competition in the High Courts in Ireland during the past five years; and what the number of vacancies now are, when they are to be filled, and how.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Secretary to the Lord Chancellor that the regulations as to the filling of vacancies in the offices of the Supreme Court by open competition apply only to the junior clerkships. During the last five years eleven junior clerks have been appointed. Of these, five were appointed by open competition, two were promoted to be junior clerks in their respective offices under statutory provisions applying to themselves, four were appointed by Judges whose rights of patronage personal to themselves) still subsist, and one clerk who had passed a qualifying examination on entering the service was transferred from another department to the Chancery Registrar's Office. There is one vacancy for a junior clerkship in the High Court to be filled up by open competition in the usual course, and the date for the examination will be shortly fixed. There is also a vacant clerkship in the Central Office under the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, but the *status* of the clerkships and requirements of that office are under consideration.

Disloyalty of Royal University Students.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in connection with any Papers he may lay upon the Table with reference to the exhibition of disloyalty by students of the Royal University and the powers of the Senate in reference thereto, he will include the cases submitted to the late Law Officers by the Senate and by the Chancellor and the replies; also the advice given to the present Government to the effect that the Senate possesses ample powers to frame a statute for the repression and punishment of disorder.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to his Question of Wednesday last.† Until the matter there referred to has come before the Senate of the Royal University, it will be premature to consider the Question now raised. The hon. Member, however, is no doubt aware that it is not the practice to lay the opinions of Law Officers on the Table of the House.

Police Protection in Cork County.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the charge of Mr. Justice Johnson to the grand jury at the recent assizes for Cork, in which he dwelt upon the fact that there was a considerable addition to the number of persons in the county to whom it had been found necessary to afford constant protection by police patrols; and whether he proposes to take special measures to deal with this state of affairs.

Mr. BRYCE: I have seen a newspaper report of the learned Judge's address to the Grand Jury in which he quoted, from the county inspector's report on the East Riding of Cork, a statement to the effect mentioned in the Question. I observe, however, that the Question makes no reference to the further fact quoted from that report by the learned Judge, namely, that the Riding, generally speaking, is in a satisfactory condition. I am not aware that any special measures are necessary other than those which are at present being taken.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 396.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: May I ask whether the practice of head constables and county inspectors reporting privately on the state of the district to the Judge of Assize has any analogy in England, and whether there is any objection to laying these reports on the Table for publication?

MR. BRYCE. As to the last Question, I must ask for notice. With regard to the first, I am not aware what the practice is in England, but as a newspaper reader I do not see that it exists.

Holocaust of Magazines.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a scene which took place in Sligo on the 21st instant, when a number of magazines, including the *Sunday Companion*, *London Magazine*, *Answers*, and a number of others, were burned in Sligo Roman Catholic cathedral yard, and if he can state what were the special circumstances under which these periodicals were destroyed.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that on the evening of the 21st instant the police found a pile of magazines and journals burning on a triangular patch of waste ground where three roads meet near the Sligo Roman Catholic cathedral. About sixty boys and girls were round the fire. The motive for burning these periodicals is a matter for surmise.

Trinity College Commission.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the proposed Commission to be appointed to make inquiries into Trinity College will also make inquiries into Maynooth College, or will he appoint a special Commission to deal with the Returns from Maynooth and enable both Reports to appear simultaneously.

MR. BRYCE: The Answer is in the negative.

Irish Agriculture.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to inquire into the subject of Irish agriculture; and, if so, who will constitute the Commission, and what are the terms of reference.

MR. BRYCE: The Government have expressed no such intention. Possibly, however, the hon. Member may refer to the Committee of Inquiry into the working of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction which is being appointed. I have already announced the names of the members of that Committee, and the terms of reference to it.

Belleek School Teacher.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland the reasons, if any, alleged for the impending dismissal of Mr. Patrick Duffy, principal teacher of Rosscor West national school, Belleek, county Fermanagh; whether he is aware that the proposed dismissal of Mr. Duffy is contrary to the wishes of the people of the district, who have sent in an influentially signed petition against it; and whether he will make inquiries with a view to having the dismissal withdrawn.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that on October 10th, 1905, they ordered the dismissal of the teacher in question because of his long continued inefficiency. Two petitions praying for Mr. Duffy's retention as teacher have been received by the Commissioners; but, in view of the reports on the school, they are unable to depart from their decision. The matter is entirely one for the Commissioners to deal with.

Marquis of Ely's Estate.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that agreements for the sale of the estates of the Marquis of Ely in county Fermanagh were perfected so long ago as November or December, 1903; whether the proceedings for sale to the tenants are still pending; if so, what is the cause of the delay in completion; and whether he will direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to this property with a view to purchase by them, if direct sale to the tenants be not possible.

MR. BRYCE: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone this Question for a few days. The estate referred to is in the Land Judge's Court, but the Registrar of the Court informs me that, having regard to the short notice given, he has been unable to furnish a report in the matter. The estate has not come before the Estates Commissioners. May I say that out of more than fifty Questions which appeared on the Paper to-day more than twenty only appeared in yesterday morning's papers, and it is really quite impossible for me to get answers from Ireland in time. I must therefore ask hon. Members to give me more notice unless it is a matter of urgency.

Mr. Fallon's Salary.

*MR. CHARLES McVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what are the qualifications and what is the salary of Mr. Fallon, inspector of the parish committee scheme of improvement under the Congested Districts Board, Ireland; whether the salary of the private secretary of this inspector is paid by the Board; and if the Board will consider whether the inspection of the scheme can be more efficiently and more economically carried out by the assistant county surveyors of the various county councils in Ireland than under the present system.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed that Mr. Fallon is a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers. His salary is £200 per annum. He has no private secretary or clerical assistant. He is an assistant land inspector under the Congested Districts Board, and his principal duties are connected with the Board's estates. He has recently been directed to report on the manner in which the parish committee scheme in county Donegal has been carried out. The duties in question could not be transferred by the Board to county surveyors.

Evicted Tenants in Cork County.

MR. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that a promise has been given to send immediately inspectors to South Cork and other constituencies, arrangements have been made by the Estates Commissioners to institute full and exhaustive inquiries into the circumstances of all the evicted tenants in those constituencies; whether it is the intention of the Estates Commissioners to instruct their inspectors, when visiting those districts, to invite the assistance of the local Member and other representative men when interviewing and negotiating between present occupiers, if any, evicted tenants, and the landlords of the estates from which they were evicted; and, if not, will steps be taken to issue instructions to do so with a view of eliciting such information as would lead to and facilitate the reinstatement of the tenants on their former holdings.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to refer to my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 26th February.† No promise to send inspectors to South Cork immediately has been given, but the Estates Commissioners will prosecute inquiries into the cases of all evicted tenants who have made application to them, as rapidly as possible. The nature of the inquiries which the Commissioners propose to make is indicated in Part IV. of the Instructions to Inspectors which were recently laid on the Table.

Oughterard Workhouse Dining Hall.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the action of the Local Government Board in withholding their sanction to the holding of a concert, under the auspices of the Gaelic League, in the dining hall of the Oughterard workhouse, although the proceeds of the concert are partly for the benefit of the workhouse children; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 797.

Mr. BRYCE: The Local Government Board have informed the Board of Guardians of Oughterard Union that, having regard to the legal decision in the case of the Attorney-General *v.* Middleton Guardians, they considered that they had no power to sanction the use of the workhouse premises for any person which is unconnected with the administration of the poor laws.

Mr. O'MALLEY: The Local Government Board actually sanctioned a concert there a little while ago.

Lough Corrib.

Mr. O'MALLEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a memorial was lodged with the Department of Agriculture in the summer of 1904, asking that a ferry should be established between Kilbeg and Knoch Ferry on Lough Corrib; can he say whether any and, if so, what Report has been made on the subject, and what decision has been arrived at.

Mr. BRYCE: The memorial in question was received by the Department of Agriculture on July 29th, 1904. The Department, in conjunction with the Congested Districts Board, have since had the site of the proposed pontoon ferry surveyed, but the site has been found to be unsuitable for the purpose in view; and in the opinion of the departments concerned it could not be made suitable without a much larger expenditure than the circumstances would warrant.

Galway Technical Institute.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at a meeting held on February 22nd the Galway Technical Institute Committee passed a resolution approving of the appointment and payment of an examination secretary; that their action in this matter was prompted by reason of the growing work and heavy correspondence attending examinations; that the resolution was duly forwarded to Dublin to be dealt with by the Board of the Department of Technical Instruction at their meeting on March 15th; that, whereas two other subjects dealing with the case of an art pupil teacher and the appointment of an assistant teacher forwarded at the same time by the Galway Committee for consideration by the Board were reserved for the meeting on the 15th of March, the resolution dealing with the appointment of a paid secretary was not so reserved, but was previously dealt with and disallowed by officials; will he say who were the officials who considered this matter; upon what ground they based their action; and is he aware that paid examination secretaries are appointed in England.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Department of Agriculture that the matters referred to in the Question as having been submitted to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction by the Galway Technical Instruction Committee were not matters for submission to the Board of Technical Instruction, and consequently none of them were brought before that Board. The Department have been in communication with the Committee with reference to the duties of their principal executive officer, but are unable to approve of the proposal to appoint an examination secretary to assist that officer. The Department are satisfied that the duties of that officer are not excessive, and under the terms of his appointment the duties of examination secretary are imposed upon him, and could not well be delegated to any other person. The Department do not know if paid secretaries are appointed in England.

Uneconomic Holdings in County Galway.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at Benmore, Galway, there are a number of tenants living upon uneconomic holdings of three, four, and five acres, while in the immediate vicinity there is a large area of untenanted grass lands, and that the tenants have enjoyed in no way the benefits of the Land Purchase Act of 1903, or received consideration from the Congested Districts Board; and whether he will ask the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board to investigate the case of these tenants.

Mr. BRYCE: The Congested Districts Board have purchased the Benmore Estate, but the property has not yet been vested in the Board, and in the meantime they have no power to dispose of it to the tenants referred to in the Question. The Board will lose no time in disposing of the lands as soon as they are in a position to do so.

Irish Agricultural Department Inquiry.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consent to have two representatives of the agricultural, industrial, and trading interest in Ireland, to be nominated by the County Councils General Council, placed upon the Commission of Inquiry into the working of the Department.

Mr. BRYCE: In my opinion the Committee is already sufficiently large, and I am not prepared to make any addition to it. The inquiry is not one into the agricultural and industrial conditions of Ireland generally, but into the working of a particular Act.

Crookenden and Casey Estate, County Caven.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners have refused to sanction the sale of the Crookenden and Casey Estate, county Cavan; will he state what the Commissioners' reasons were, what were the terms of sale proposed, who was responsible for the same, and whether these tenants may hope for another opportunity of purchasing.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that proceedings were instituted before them for the sale of the property, referred to as five separate estates. The total purchase-money agreed upon was £41,982. The Commissioners had three of the estates inspected, the proposed purchase price of which averaged 21·8 years' purchase of the nominal rents. The Commissioners, in the exercise of the discretion vested in them by statute, declined to declare the land fit to be regarded as separate estates for the purposes of the Act of 1903. They will, however, be prepared to consider any application which may be made to them to purchase the estate under Section 6 of the Act.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court—Treatment of Prisoners.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Thomas J. Smith, J.P., Joseph Mulligan, and Terence Fitzpatrick, at present lodged in Dundalk Prison, under an order of the Land Judge for contempt of Court, are confined in their cells for twenty-two hours each day; whether, when the friends of these men visited the prison, they were only allowed to communicate through an iron grating in the presence and hearing of a warder, who stood prepared with note book and pencil to report the interview; and will he say whether the police have reported that the account given by John Brady, on whose affidavit the attachment was had, was exaggerated.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of releasing these men, as they are well known members of the Nationalist Party?

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. In accordance with the prison rules, these prisoners have two hours' daily exercise and are confined in their cells for the rest of the day. It is the fact that when these prisoners received visits from their friends they were separated from them by a wire netting. There is no regulation requiring such separation in the case of first-class misdemeanants, and the General Prisons Board have instructed the governor of the prison to discontinue the arrangement in this case. It is necessary under the rules that an officer should be present at such visits, but it is not the fact that the officer has a notebook and pencil in order to report the interview. I cannot give any information in reply to the last inquiry. Reports furnished by the police to their superior officers are privileged documents and their contents cannot be disclosed.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman institute an inquiry into the circumstances of this case?

Mr. BRYCE suggested that the Question could be discussed on the Motion which had been put down in reference to contempt of Court. He was not prepared to order a special inquiry.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The Motion for next week is a general one; this is a particular case, and in view of the fact that these gentlemen have been committed to prison without having been heard in their own defence I ask for an inquiry.

MR. BRYCE: I am afraid I can give no undertaking.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman referred to Mr. Gladstone's speech in 1882, in which he said the law as to contempt needed amelioration, and that he would bring in a Bill next year limiting it?

MR. BRYCE: I have referred to the speech. I cannot argue the point now, but at the proper time I shall be prepared to deal with it.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Thomas J. Smith, J.P., Terence Fitzpatrick, and Joseph Mulligan, who were removed to Dundalk Gaol on Friday last under an attachment order for contempt of court, were arrested by Arthur Forbes, who is the receiver on the estate affected by the proceedings; is he also aware that Mr. Forbes initiated the proceedings and attended specially in Dublin on the hearing of the Motion; and can he say if Mr. Forbes will charge the estate for attendance as receiver in Dublin, and also in his capacity as sheriff for subsequently executing the order, or will these amounts, if not personally paid, be a public charge.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Registrar of the Land Judge's Court that he has no official knowlege that Mr. Arthur Forbes, who, as sub-sheriff for County Cavan, executed the writs of attachment in this case, is the same person as the receiver of that name who instituted the proceedings for contempt of court; but, having made inquiries, the registrar is satisfied that the receiver and sub-sheriff are one and the same person. The registrar adds that under the usual practice of the Court, all proper costs and expenses in such cases are paid by the persons attached, and failing payment by such persons the matter rests in the discretion of the Court.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Then the person who initiated the proceedings and obtained the order of attachment afterwards as sheriff executed it?

MR. BRYCE: I gather that is the result of the Answer.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Could the Judge of the High Court have directed any one else to execute the order?

[No Answer was audible.]

Irish Elementary School Teachers.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what scheme he proposes in order to increase the salaries of teachers in Irish elementary schools.

MR. BRYCE: I explained fully to the House last week that this matter rests primarily with the Commissioners of National Education;† and of course it rests also with the Treasury. They and the Irish Government will consider it in conjunction. I think the salaries of the teachers ought in many cases to be increased, but I can make no statement on the subject at present.

Grants to Irish Secondary Schools.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rate of payment of grants awarded to secondary schools by the Intermediate Board for Ireland has been reduced by one-third; that this reduction was made suddenly; that consequently many schools, on account of loss of income, are scarcely able to meet their requirements and to maintain the necessary staff; that the amount of money expended by the Board in prizes and exhibitions has also been largely reduced during the past few years; and that while reductions are being made in school grants, and in rewards to deserving pupils, the expenditure on administration and examinations has been largely increased; will he explain why these reductions of grants have been made in spite of the fact that the Board has built up a reserve fund of more than £100,000; and will he say if secondary schools in Ireland are rewarded in proportion to the increase of expenditure in alcoholic drinks, and fined in proportion to the increase of sobriety in the country.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 711.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of Intermediate Education that although the rate of payment for school grant has been reduced by approximately one-third in comparison with the rate of 1904, the total amount distributed in 1905 among managers of schools was £49,922 in school grant, and £2,974 in bonuses for choirs and orchestras, as against £57,982 in school grant and £1,187 in bonuses in 1904. It was generally known that there had been a considerable increase in the number of students examined in 1905, and, in the opinion of the Board, the school authorities might therefore have anticipated a reduction in the rate. The amount of money expended on exhibitions and prizes has been diminished, but the amount saved in that way has gone towards the school grant. The expenditure on administration has not been increased, but the expenditure on examinations has necessarily increased with the numbers of students to be dealt with. Under the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, the Board receive the residue of the Irish share of the Customs and Excise duties, after payment of £78,000 to the Commissioners of National Education, and consequently the amount of this principal source of the Board's income must vary with the amount of those duties.

Macroom District Council and the Estates Commissioners.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a Resolution has been received by the Estates Commissioners from the Macroom Rural District requesting them, in the event of their purchasing any estate in that district in which there is untenanted land, to allocate and divide up the same among evicted tenants, tenants of uneconomic holdings, and labourers skilled and unskilled, pursuant to the provisions of the Land Act of 1903, and further suggesting that the powers vested in the Commissioners for stocking and improving the portions of untenanted land so divided, and for helping the new occupiers to till the same, should be exercised as far as possible, and expressing the willingness of the district council to appoint trustees to carry out the provisions regarding labourers contained in the Act; and will he state what instructions have been given regarding this Resolution.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received a copy of the Resolution referred to in the Question, and that, in the event of their acquiring untenanted land in the district, they will duly consider the views expressed in the Resolution.

Royal Irish Constabulary Salaries.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many assistant inspector generals of the Royal Irish Constabulary now hold office; when was the number increased; what are the amounts of their salaries and allowances, respectively, and of those of the inspector general; what was the number of and the total amount of the pay and allowances of the county inpectors in Ireland for the last financial year; what was the number of and the total amount of the pay and allowances of district inspectors for the same year; and what reduction in the numbers and annual cost of county inspectors and district inspectors has been made within the past three years.

*MR. BRYCE: The number of assistant inspectors-general now holding office is three, of whom one is commandant of the Royal Irish Constabulary depot. This number was fixed by statute in 1859. The salaries and allowances of these officers, as well as those of the inspector-general, deputy inspector-general, and the other officers referred to in the Question, are fully stated in the Annual Estimates, to which I beg to refer the hon. Member. The Estimates for the coming financial year make provision for 206 district inspectors, as compared with 213 three years ago, the saving thus effected being £1,771. No reduction in the number of county inspectors has been made.

Pauper Lunatic Charges in Ireland.

*MR. CHARLES McVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a Resolution of the Ballinasloe Asylum Committee, and afterwards adopted by the Donegal District Asylum Committee, asking for legislation in favour of the relief of local taxation for the up-keep of pauper lunatics in Irish asylums by making it a charge on Imperial funds; and, if so, will he say what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer to the reply which I gave to the similar Question of the hon. Member for North Longford on Monday last.†

Letterkenny and Stranorlar District Councils.

*Mr. CHARLES McVEIGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a Resolution passed by the Urban District Council at Letterkenny, East Donegal, on December 4th, 1905; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in view of its effect upon the whole of the county Donegal.

*Mr. CHARLES McVEIGH: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolutions passed by the Stranorlar District Council, East Donegal, on the 19th instant; and, if so, will he say what action he proposes to take in this matter.

*Mr. BRYCE: I have received the Resolutions referred to in these two Questions. I understand that in the last session of Parliament a Bill was introduced by the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland and the Midland Railway Company, under which these companies proposed to purchase the undertaking of the Donegal Railway Company. The Bill was opposed by both the Corporation and the Harbour Commissioners of Londonderry, at whose instance a clause was inserted securing a preferential rate for goods carried on the Donegal railway from and to the Port of Londonderry. The Bill of last session was dropped by its promoters, but has now been re-introduced without any clause for preferential rates in favour of Londonderry. The Resolutions to which the Questions refer protest against the insertion in the Bill of any such clause. The matter will be one for Parliament to deal with in due course.

Stamp Duty on Purchase Agreements.

Mr. O'SHEE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that on the sale of a farm, purchased under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts by the tenant purchaser, the stamp duty impressed on the conveyance or transfer is assessed, not only on the purchase price given to the tenant purchaser of the farm, but also on the entire amount outstanding of the advance which had been made by the Land Commission to the landlord at the time of the sale by him to his tenants; whether he is aware that during the Committee stage of the Land Act of 1903, when passing through Parliament, the late Attorney-General for Ireland undertook to consider an Amendment moved on this matter before the Report stage of the Bill, but that no decision was announced at that stage; and whether, in view of the burden which this assessment will inflict in connection with the sale and transfer of land in Ireland, the stamp duty on such sales and transfers will be limited to the amount payable in respect of the actual consideration.

Mr. McKENNA: Stamp duty is properly charged, by reference to Section 57 of the Stamp Act, 1891, not only on the money consideration paid by the transferee but also on the outstanding portion of any advance made to the purchasing tenant. This provision of the law is not peculiar to Ireland, but is of general application and affects any property conveyed to any person subject to the payment of any money. There is no ground for changing either the law or the settled practice in such cases.

Mr. O'SHEE: Is not this a burden which was never contemplated when the Act was passed?

Mr. McKENNA: I will look into the matter.

Signatures in Irish for the Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, on the 12th instant, three gentlemen called at the post office, Curragh Camp, to open a joint account in the savings banks, but the clerks refused to accept the forms tendered on the ground that the were signed in Irish; can he say why this exception is made in the case of a savings bank account, seeing that postal orders are cashed although signed in Irish.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 845.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The chief safeguard against fraudulent withdrawals from savings bank accounts is afforded by the comparison of signatures; and as an account may be operated upon at any of 14,600 post offices in the United Kingdom, it is essential, if this safeguard is to possess any value, that the signatures should be written in characters understood by the post office staff generally.

Enniskillen Post Office—Fees on Callers' Letters.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if it was by his authority, and, if so, for what reason, that a special charge of 3d. was made to all persons applying for their letters at the Enniskillen post office on Saturday the 17th March; if not by his authority, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter, and prevent such a charge being made in the future.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The 17th of March was a Bank Holiday in Ireland, and a charge of 3d. is the authorised charge to persons calling for letters at any Post Office on Bank Holidays, unless they are private box renters or persons entitled to use the *Poste Restante*.

Scottish Supply.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Scottish Supply will be taken before Easter.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): No, Sir. I do not think that there is any probability of Scottish Supply being taken before Easter.

Time Limit on Speeches.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the complaint of length of speeches in this House and consequent delay in the transaction of business, he will suggest to the Select Committee on Procedure that they should consider the question and report proposals for a time limit on speeches.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I shall be very glad if the Select Committee find it within their reference to make a proposal on this subject, but this is a matter entirely within their discretion.

South African Committee of Inquiry.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the public will be allowed to attend the ordinary sittings of the South African Commission except in such special cases when the Commissioners think it desirable to take evidence in private

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The members of the Committee—not Commission—will be left to take such steps as they think fit to attain the objects for which they have been appointed, and we have perfect confidence in their discretion.

Transvaal Voters' Roll.

*MR. STAVELEY HILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the estimated number of young farmers in the Transvaal whose admissions to the voters' roll is desirable according to the instructions given to the South African Committee, and if this instruction applies equally in the Orange River Colony.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This is one of the questions which the Committee are being sent out to South Africa to investigate. It is part of the instruction to the Committee to report the probable number of voters added to the roll by a system of manhood suffrage —and no estimate such as that described by the hon. Member can be given pending their report. The Committee are also instructed to make some estimate of the results of applying analogous processes to the Orange River Colony.

Chinese Coolies in South Africa.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in view of the order to Sir West Ridgeway to inquire into the social conditions of the population, the South African Committee will be allowed to report on the *status* and social condition of the Chinese coolies.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, this will be no part of their duty.

New South African Constitutions.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if Parliament will be allowed to express its opinion on the scheme to be submitted by the South African Committee, or if the constitution of the new Colonies is to be solely determined by His Majesty's Government.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No scheme will be submitted by the South African Committee. The Constitution of the new Colonies will, of course, be decided upon by the Government; and Parliament will have ample opportunity of expressing its opinion upon it at the proper time.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Will the Committee inquire into the question of automatic redistribution?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Automatic redistribution! Perhaps the hon. Member will give notice of that Question.

RULES OF PROCEDURE.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked when the Government proposed to ask the House to consider the Report of the Procedure Committee and if their proposals would be laid on the Table at once so that hon. Members could consider them.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot promise that the Government will adopt exactly the recommendations of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure. The amendments proposed to the rules by the Government will be placed on the Paper to-morrow and the subject will be put down for Monday.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Lords Message [27th March] relating to the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Sunday Trading, considered.

Ordered, That the Committee of this House do meet the Lords' Committee as proposed by Their Lordships.—(*Mr. Joseph Pease.*)

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2) [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of any expenses and allowances incurred under any Act of the present session to amend the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1901 (King's Recommendation signified), to-morrow. —(*Mr. Joseph Pease*).

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c., with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 97.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 97.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 131.]

VACCINATION BILL.

"To amend the Law in respect to the procedure of officers and justices of the peace administering the several Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Arthur Black; supported by Mr. Channing, Mr. Levy, Sir Charles M'Laren, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. George White, and Sir William Collins; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on

Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Pike Pease; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Abel H. Smith.

Report to lie upon the Table.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No. 2) BILL.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): I have to ask the leave of the House to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to justices of the peace. The principal provision, and, indeed, the only specially important provision, in the Bill, is one for abolishing the existing property qualification, known as the qualification by estate, for county magistrates. That qualification was imposed in 1744 under a statute which made it imperative for any one appointed justice of the peace in a county to have land, freehold, or copyhold, or long leasehold, to the value of at least £100 a year. There was another qualification in the Act very much to the same effect, with which I need not trouble the House. The severity of that somewhat high qualification was mitigated by the Act of 1875, under which it became possible to appoint persons in a county if they occupied a dwelling rated for the poor at £100 a year. I need not point out that these qualifications very materially restricted the area of choice in the appointment of gentlemen living in the county to this important judicial office; indeed, there are some industrial districts in mining and manufacturing counties where it has been not only difficult, but almost impossible, to procure gentlemen in any way competent to fulfil magisterial duties, who at the same time possess this qualification as resident landowner or occupier. But there is a wider reason than that for the alteration in the law which we propose by the Bill. When the qualification by estate was originally devised and enacted there was some reason for it in the fact that education, especially that higher education which is derived from the responsible conduct of public affairs, was almost a monopoly of the propertied classes. You might say it was the privilege of property. That state of things exists no longer. Not only is education of the scholastic variety more widely spread, but public life has been thrown open to all classes, with the happy result that in every district of England are found men of position and authority well qualified to hold office, quite irrespective of the wealth they may possess, especially landed wealth. It may be that in relation to local government or other forms of leadership they have done good work which has a more educating effect for the discharge of magisterial duties than even the possession of a landed estate to the value of £100 a year. There is this difference in the forms of the existing qualifications. Where a magistrate is qualified by occupation he holds office only by virtue of continuous occupation, but where he is qualified for appointment by estate he may part with his qualification and still retain his office. I think the House will agree that it is somewhat incongruous, and I may say unfair, that persons of the class I have described, men who have secured the esteem and regard of their fellow-citizens, should be unable to assume office because the law requires that they shall have a certain amount of a particular kind of wealth. I will not argue upon the qualification one way or another; the House is competent to judge of it, and I desire to be brief in my introduction of the Bill because I have no doubt the House is desirous of proceeding to the more important Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill. There are other parts of the Bill to which I may make brief reference. Alterations of the law are proposed in minor particulars. For instance, it is proposed that a man may be appointed justice of the peace for the county though he does not actually live in the county, but within a distance of seven miles. This is the qualification in boroughs, and is found convenient, and it would be convenient in counties where a petty sessions division is near the border of the county. It is also proposed to remove the disqualification of solicitors living in a county, but it is suggested that it would be well to provide that they must not practise, directly or indirectly, before a justice of the peace in the county or in a borough within the county. There is just one provision more. I hope the House will not discover in it or suspect it has any malign motive; it is, I think, purely formal. A great many *ex officio* magistrates have been created by recent legislation, and it is thought desirable that they should be removable on the same terms as other magistrates. These are all the provisions of the Bill, and I think I may claim credit for having kept well within the limits of my allotted time.

Bill to amend the law relating to Justices of the Peace, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (No 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Justices of the Peace," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 133.]

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S): I have to ask the leave of the House to introduce a Bill for amending the law in relation to trade unions and trade disputes. I think it will be acknowledged that the law connected with this subject is in need of revision, and should be placed on a more assured and satisfactory basis. Recent legal decisions have seriously disturbed preconceived notions. A construction has been given to the legislation of 1871 and 1875 which, while it manifests a great desire to check abuse of power on the part of these organisations, has also seriously curtailed their usefulness and efficiency. A scope has been given to the law of conspiracy so loose and so wide, that it is impossible to indicate beforehand what may be the legal character of the conduct of these organisations, and which is determined by the *ex post facto* decision of a legal tribunal. The undoubted right of peaceful persuasion has been cut down to the point of extinction. Funds which have been contributed largely for the purpose of provision against sickness or misfortune, or want of employment, have been held liable to meet claims which have rested upon repudiated acts of unauthorised officials. The result of this state of things has been to create a feeling of insecurity and a sense of injustice. Parliament has more than once declared that the subject is ripe for legislative treatment, and we cannot doubt that this opinion has been emphatically endorsed by the country during the recent elections. The Government feel that they have a mandate on this question, and after anxious consideration they are wishful to submit to the judgment of the House—to all parties in the House—the conclusions that seem to them to meet in the best practical way the many difficulties of this somewhat difficult problem. I wish at the outset to acknowledge the obligation Parliament is under to the labours of the Commission appointed to consider the law in regard to the subject. Whatever may have been the opinion, and opinions differed, as to the desirability of appointing the Commission to report on the state of the law, there can be but one opinion in regard to the labours of the gentlemen who were appointed. We have an able, enlightened survey of the law in regard to this somewhat obscure subject; and, while the Government have adopted their own views and taken their own course, they wish to acknowledge their obligation to those gentlemen whose labours have lightened their task.

I may, perhaps, be allowed to show briefly how the situation has arisen. In their early days trade unions had to struggle against the ban of common law and repressive statutes. They were organisations which interfered with the perfect freedom of relationship between employers and employed and the free course of trade, and until a very recent period of our history this difficulty prevented any large extension of this industrial movement. In 1824 and 1825 repressive legislation disappeared; and in 1859 a declaration was made giving to these societies the right to exercise the faculty of persuasion, provided they did so in a reasonable and peaceable manner. In 1867 the pulse of the democracy was quickened by the Borough Franchise Act of that year, with the result that we had a Royal Commission followed by and the charter of trade unionism of 1871, afterwards amplified and expanded by the supplementary Act of 1875. It is true that the legislation of 1871 and 1875 was limited in its scope. Its main aim was to remove the ban of the common law and the stigma of illegality from the operations of these bodies. It enabled them to register themselves, to frame rules, to amass property, to appoint agents, and to defend themselves and their funds from attack. It also created an important declaration limiting their criminal liability to those Acts only which are criminal if committed by individuals. But in regard to their responsibility to the civil law legislation is absolutely silent. That silence has led to serious controversy in determining the aim of Parliament in connection with that legislation. The House of Lords, which is the authoritative exponent of our law, and binds the High Court of Parliament as it binds every other Court in the realm, has pointed out that that silence does not disturb the liability under which these unions rested under the common law of the country, that the fact of registration made them suable in respect of wrongful conduct in the name of the organisation which was placed on the register, and that since the year 1883 the amalgamation of our systems of judicature as they existed under the common law and in Courts of equity made that liability enforceable by a form of action which up to that moment was only known in the Courts of Chancery. The period of thirty years between 1871 and 1901 was a period of great material prosperity in regard to these unions. Their numbers increased, their branches spread, their wealth grew. The funds which were available to meet claims that might be made upon them induced actions to be brought in numerous quarters for the purpose of satisfying claims for redress for injuries attributed to conduct of which members of the community complained, and from 1892 onward a series of actions were successfully tried which at first took the form of actions for injunctions and afterwards of actions for damages. It is impossible to say that the result of this litigation did not create a serious situation. Trade unions are institutions which consist of the working classes. Their funds represent the hard-earned savings of a large and most worthy section of the community, and they have been contributed in no small degree for the purpose of making provision against misfortune. This liability and its consequences have created a problem with which it is necessary that Parliament should deal, and which the Government have done their best to solve. In our opinion the law needs most careful examination, redefinition, and modification, and some of the general principles of the law require regulation in their application to these bodies.

In the first place, let me call attention to the law of conspiracy. The expression "conspiracy" is a little apt to shake timid nerves, and to suggest periods of our history when our Constitution was unstable and when sinister designs against the Crown and society were incidents of our public life. But conspiracy in law simply means combination to violate the rights of another. Combination is a conspiracy or agreement, and the fact that its object is to violate a right, constitutes it a criminal act and makes it subject to a claim for damages on the part of the person whose right has been violated by the act so committed. This is a part of our law which I may describe as one of the blank spaces upon the juridical map. There are a few rough tracks across it emanating from different sources, and generally leading to different results. The wary and prudent litigant gives it as wide a berth as possible because it is the region of judge-made law; and when he is once lost in that area it is not easy for him always to know exactly where he is or by what means he will escape from it. We propose that this region shall be carefully plotted out, that its frontiers shall be limited, and that there shall be carried through it a statutory highway which, so far, at any rate, as these organisations are concerned, may be safely travelled by the most unwary traveller. The legislation of 1875, while it defined the law of conspiracy in its criminal aspect, left that law, in so far as it is a department of civil jurisprudence, entirely untouched; and the result has been that this area has been the field of fierce struggles between disputants of legal eminence. I doubt whether in our time the serene judicial atmosphere has ever been so much disturbed as it has been by different theories with regard to the law of conspiracy. One party I may describe as the party of the late Lord Herschell. Their view has been that an act of a combination is lawful or unlawful according to the standard which you would apply in order to determine the legal quality of an act of an individual, and that if an act committed by an individual would be lawful, this same act would be none the less lawful although committed by a combination. In giving judgment in the case of "Allen *v.* Flood" Lord Herschell said—

"It is not for your Lordships to express any opinion on the policy of trade unions. They

> are now recognised by law. They act in the interests of their class. If they resort to unlawful acts, they may be indicted or sued. If they do not resort to unlawful acts they are entitled to further their interests in the manner which seems to them best and most effective."

That view has not been adopted by the same tribunal in considering later cases which have come before them. In the case of "Quinn *v.* Leathem" you will find an entirely different version of the law of conspiracy. There it is stated that, although an act of one man may be lawful, if it be the act of a combination of two men it may become unlawful. The great disadvantage of this theory is that no combination can know beforehand whether the act they propose to commit or authorise will be regarded as lawful or unlawful by the tribunal which may afterwards be called upon to consider it. There is nothing more perplexing for the council of a trade union than to feel that, although an act they propose to commit would be lawful if done by an individual, if it was part of the policy of their union it might be subject to review and animadversion by an unfriendly tribunal. Let me give one or two cogent illustrations. One is a favourite illustration of Lord Herschell's. A cook gives notice because she objects to the butler. She is quite entitled to give notice, and the act is perfectly innocent. But if the cook, the housemaid, and the kitchenmaid combine to give notice because they object to the butler, the act becomes unlawful. The reason is that the act, being the act of a combination, tends to disturb the security of the employment of the butler, and, inasmuch as it tends to affect the interests of the butler in the exercise of his calling, the act, although innocent on the part of one individual, becomes unlawful, because it is the result of a combination of three. Let me take another case. A union man objects to work on the same job with a non-union man. A single union man may object to work with another man for any reason. But if you get a combination of men who object to work with those who will not join their union, that becomes unlawful, because it is the act of a combination which disturbs the security of labour of the non-union men. Or, in another case, the boilermakers refuse to work on an iron ship with the shipwrights. Acting singly, they have a perfect right to select the men with whom they will carry on their operations. Acting collectively, their conduct becomes unlawful, because it tends to interfere with the freedom of the members of another union to carry on their calling. In all these cases, you have a violation of the principle which Lord Herschell clearly defined and which I submit to the House is the only principle capable of practical application in regard to this department of the law. You have an interference with the policy of these unions carried out by themselves with a view to advancing their own interests, because judicial opinion considered that the advancement of those interests is unfavourable to the interests of the community.

Then you have the doubtful cases which remain at this moment unsolved, and unless the law be altered it will be difficult to get a solution. Suppose you have an objection on the part of trade union men to men being employed on piece-work. Is that to be lawful or unlawful—because it may be said that you disturb the security of employment of the men who will only work piece-work. Supposing there is an objection on the part of skilled men to the employment of labourers in connection with machinery. Is that to be lawful or unlawful, because it may be said that you will disturb the opportunities of employment which would otherwise be open to unskilled men? Or suppose you have a combination to limit output. All these are matters in regard to which, as the law now stands, there is no indication, no rule, no principle. The solution of the problem to which they give rise must be left to be dealt with judicially after the question has arisen in consequence of an act committed.

What is the remedy for this state of things? We propose to call in aid the principle which was established by the Act of 1875. It was there declared that the character of an act committed by a trade union within the purview of the criminal law should depend on the consideration of whether it was criminal or not, assuming it to be the act of an individual. And so we say in regard to the applications of the civil law, that that act shall be right or wrong, shall be lawful or unlawful, according as it would be lawful or unlawful, judged on the assumption that it has been committed by an individual and not by a combination; and I submit to the House that there is no other solution than that which I have suggested.

The next subject upon which I propose to say a few words is that of peaceful picketing, which I prefer to call the right of peaceful persuasion. What is the right of peaceful persuasion? It is an essential part of the right to strike. How is it possible to strike unless you can persuade your fellows to join you? How is it possible successfully to conduct a strike unless you may persuade men who are introduced from a distance not to interfere between the strikers and their employer? The right to persuade those who would naturally join and swell your ranks, and the right to dissuade those who are brought in with a view to prevent the success of a strike, is absolutely essential for the effective conduct of an operation of that kind. The law at present is in a condition that I think I may fairly describe as impracticable, if not absurd. How does it stand? It is held to be perfectly lawful to point out to the men what are the points of difference. You may either ask for information with regard to the strike, or you may give them information with regard to the nature of the conflict between the workmen and the employer. But, if you go one step further and so present the information you give them as to make your appeal in the nature of persuasion, you are then violating the law. The distinction is one which a legal mind may grasp; but it is impossible to suppose that the distinction can be grasped by any advocate of a trade union who endeavours within the limits of the law as it now stands to give information to persons who are introduced from a distance and who are sought to be employed to take the places which the strikers have vacated. There are many illustrations in the decided cases which show that unless this part of the law is altered it is impossible to conduct a strike successfully. Further, in enacting, as we propose to enact in express terms, the right peaceably to persuade, we are not calling upon the House to make a new law. We are only reviving a law which is as old as the year 1859, because in that year there was a provision put into the statute upon this subject which was then passed, which attached an interpretation to a restrictive provision in an earlier Act. The statute used this language: It is provided that no person should, by reason merely of his endeavouring peaceably, and in a reasonable manner, and without threats and intimidation, direct or indirect, to persuade, be deemed guilty of molestation or obstruction within the meaning of the Act of 1825, or should, therefore, be subject to prosecution or indictment for conspiracy. It may be said that the Act of 1875 repealed the Act of 1859. There is certainly no indication of repeal in that Act, and the history of the debates of that period show that it was thought that the earlier provision held good. Therefore, in regard to this matter, we are only proposing to ask the House to take a step which occurs to us as eminently reasonable, as representing practical justice, and one which has the advantage of statutory precedent.

I have next to ask the House to consider what is the most difficult department of this question. I refer to the law of agency. The Bill of the hon. Member for Newcastle, and the hon. Member for Clitheroe, and other Bills on this subject, have not touched upon the law of agency. They propose to accomplish a result which would relieve these unions from unjust action by another method, and it will be for the House to determine which is the best way to accomplish the object. I do not think there will be any difference of opinion as to the nature of the mischief. I do not think there will be any difference of opinion as to the desirability of obviating the operation of the mischief as it affects these unions. There may be a difference of opinion with regard to the best mode of dealing with the evil, and therefore, I wish to explain to the House the scheme of the Government and submit it to the careful consideration of hon. Members who have hitherto thought this problem could best be solved in another fashion. First of all, let me say there is no doubt that trade unions have been the victims of a rigorous administration of the law of agency, totally inapplicable to organisations of this kind, and that the result has been to work considerable practical injustice. The grievance which has been occasioned was indicated in 1894 by the Report of the Labour Members constituting the minority of the Labour Commission which had been appointed in the previous year. In that Report I find this passage—

> "To expose the large amalgamated societies of the country, with their accumulated funds, sometimes reaching a quarter of a million sterling, to be sued for damages by any employer in any part of the country, or by any discontented member or non-unionist for the action of some branch secretary or delegate would be a great injustice."

I doubt whether there is anyone in this House who will not endorse that view. A union which has hundreds of branches in different parts of the country, which has funds representing contributions from every quarter of the kingdom, owing to the hasty and rash act of some official connected with some branch, or owing to the imprudent, and, it may be, defiant action of the committee of some branch, may be involved in liability for immense sums. Those who have no concern with the conduct of the official or committee, conduct disapproved of, it may be, the moment it came to their notice, have still been held liable and their funds liable for damages. The cause of the present state of things is not far to seek. You have bodies of an exceedingly loose organisation. Their ramifications are manifold, they employ a large number of officials whose authority is often difficult to define, and there are a great number of persons who claim to act on behalf of the union, and whose conduct is very often liable to involve them in difficulties. In point of fact, they have been the victims of the application of a legal doctrine by which agency is implied from conduct, and is not attributable to any express authorisation. Take the history of various cases. You get the votes of a committee, you get the speeches and actions of individuals, you get letters which pass between one official and another, and this mass of material is left to the tribunal, who are invited to extract from it some measure of authorisation for the conduct of some agent by the body responsible for the operations of the union as a whole. We have as a result the cases of which the trade unions complain and which could not be defended in this House. I will take two illustrations. The colliers connected with a colliery in Yorkshire, to which I will not refer by name, because I believe the matter is to some extent *sub judice*, left their employment without giving in their notices. The colliery was thrown into confusion, the works were stopped, and considerable loss and inconvenience resulted. Mr. Pickard, then a Member of this House, immediately went down to Yorkshire, saw the men who were connected with this branch, ordered them to go back to their work, and took every step to induce, if not to compel, them to go back. But men are sometimes obstinate; they are like all of us; their *amour-propre* was involved; and they set this counsel at defiance. Notwithstanding Mr. Pickard's conduct it was held by the tribunal, which consisted of a Judge and jury, that the strike was an authorised act for which the union was responsible. Similarly, there was the case with which my hon. friend the Member for Derby could acquaint the House, where there was a railway strike. The men left without giving their notices, the whole influence of the organisation was used with a view to inducing them to return to their work, but in vain, and the responsibility for that act was held to lie with the union.

We intend to make that state of things for the future impossible, and I think we can do it. We propose so to define the law of agency in its application to these unions that no act can be made the foundation of a claim for redress from union funds unless it is perfectly clear that that act was authorised by the governing body of the union. That is the first step we propose to take. We propose that the union shall appoint an executive committee, which shall have the right of conducting all operations which may bring them into collision either with their employers or with the outside public; and we propose to provide that the unions shall not be bound, and their property shall not be bound, by any act unless it be the act of the executive itself—which, I take it, would mean the act of that body by resolution formally passed—or unless it be the act of some person whom they have authorised to bind them by the conduct which is impugned. That is not enough, because it may be said that the principal is liable for the acts of an agent, and that the agent is acting within the sphere of his authority, even although he may violate

Sir John Walton.

his instructions. We do not propose that that principle of law should apply to these cases. In the second place, we propose to provide that the executive, in appointing an agent, may prescribe the acts which that agent is not permitted to do—may indicate exactly what is the sphere and scope of his duties, and may restrict him to that sphere in such a way that, if the conduct impugned is a violation of those instructions, then the union shall not be bound by it. There is still a third consideration. You may have a self-constituted agent who takes some action on behalf of and in the interests of the union; he may say he has the authority of the union, and it may be that neither of the safeguards I have indicated would apply. We have, therefore, put a provision in the Bill that, if the executive when knowledge of that conduct is brought to them, repudiate the act and indicate their disapproval of it, they shall not be bound by it. You thus have a code of safety. First the constitution of the committee which shall conduct these operations, and by whom alone the acts may be committed for which the union is responsible. In the second place, they have the power of limiting the authority of the agents whom they may appoint; and, in the third place, they have the right of repudiation in regard to acts of which they disapprove. I think that this is wise, and constitutes a pretty effective defence of these unions against attack. As I have said, these provisions involve some alteration of the general law. There is the rule by which a principal is made liable for acts which involve the violation of the instructions given to his agent, provided those acts are done on his behalf and in his interests. It is difficult, perhaps, to say conclusively what is the true foundation of that doctrine. The best reason I can give is that, inasmuch as profit often attends acts not in themselves authorised, and which involve a violation of instructions, a corelative liability should attach to them. That law is certainly a part of the law of the land, yet in our view it is a principle which ought not to apply in relation to trade unions. I am glad to find that in this matter we have a useful precedent. I do not want to claim credit for the scheme which we are submitting to the House, ignoring the meritorious claim which can certainly be urged on behalf of other persons who have discussed this subject. The scheme which I submit to the House is very largely that suggested by the Commission, and, further, it is a part of a scheme which was submitted to the Parliament of New South Wales in 1903. I find that the clause which was introduced by the Attorney-General of the Colony, was as follows—

> "No trade union or industrial union or association of employers shall be liable to any suit or action, nor shall the funds of such union or association be in any way chargeable in respect of any act or word, done, spoken, or written, during or in connection with an industrial dispute by any agent, if it be proved that such agent acted:—(1) contrary to instructions *bona fide* given by or (2) without the knowledge of the governing body of such union or association, and that the union or association has *bona fide*, and by all reasonable means repudiated the acts or words complained of at the earliest opportunity and with reasonable publicity."

We think our clause is much more artistic than the clause in the New South Wales Act, but they both proceed on the same lines. What is the alternative? The alternative method is the royal road out of the difficulty. The argument one hears is, "Why trouble very carefully to define liability, why trouble to reconcile the law of [illegible] agency with the administration [illegible] of bodies of this kind: why not [illegible] say no action whatever shall be brought?" But just let me ask the House to face that proposition. The proposition, I understand, is that, however great and ruinous the loss that may be suffered by an individual, however unjustifiable the conduct of the union which may occasion that loss, even in the case of that conduct having been carried out by means of the use of the funds which are controlled by the union, yet those funds, the property of the union, are not to be made liable to redress the claim consequent on that loss. You must fairly face that proposition. I invite the House, before they put a proposition of that kind into legislative shape, seriously to consider its effect. It would be impossible to confine it to these combinations. If you place them in this position you will have to deal with claims on the part of other bodies also entitled to the consideration of Parliament, who may ask that the same privilege should be extended to them. Well, Sir, I ask the House is there not this danger attending the alternative policy to which I have referred, namely, that in your anxiety to check one injustice you may create another? In your wish to prevent injustice being inflicted upon trades unions, you may create injustice against individual members of the community. And there is another argument which I have seen used. We are a democratic country, we are a democratic Party, we are a democratic Parliament, and probably the Members below the gangway opposite are the most democratic element in it. But are you not proposing class privileges? In the old days of our law these immunities of class existed. They were the privileges of the aristocracy, and they have been abolished. Do not let us create a privilege for the proletariat, and give a sort of benefit of clergy to trade unions analogous to the benefit of clergy which was formerly enjoyed and which created an immunity against actions in favour of certain sections of the population. Then there is another consideration which has influenced the Government in trying to settle this question. Are we sure that it is wise to remove from these unions and particularly from the agents employed, a sense of responsibility? They are often swayed by passion, by excitement, and by natural feeling. Is it right that their agents should move about with the consciousness that whatever they do, the property of the union will not have to bear any loss? Is that feeling likely to produce caution, prudence, self-restraint, and regard for the rights and feelings of others? Is it not likely to have rather the opposite effect and to check that sense of discipline which it is so desirable the head office of a great organisation should use over the squadrons under them? But I am glad to say that this claim for immunity has not been until quite lately, and I do not know whether it is now, the demand of the Labour Party as a body. I have before me expressions of opinion of one or two of their most eminent and trusted leaders in which they point out that they make no such claim. My hon. friend the Member for Derby at the Trades Union Congress in September, 1903, according to *The Times* said—

> "He failed to see how the Labour Members could meet their opponents in the House with an argument for being placed in a position different and apart from all others under the civil law. Having argued that all employers should be responsible for all accidents to workmen, no matter by whom or how they were caused, they were now, on the other hand, asking that, whatever act might be committed intentionally or deliberately, under the rules of an organisation, by its executive government or by an official organisation, they should not be responsible for any action thus committed. He thought that illogical. In the Taff Vale case the rules were defied; the rules were violated; and if the executive had adhered to the rules, there would have been no Taff Vale judgment."

The right hon. Member for Morpeth expressed the same view. He said—

> "The unions should, in my opinion, frankly accept responsibility for the action of their agents, when their agents are acting by the authority of executive councils. The law as to conspiracy and picketing should be amended, and clearly defined. Trade unionists are for the most part democratic, avowedly opposed to privilege, and yet they are to ask to be treated differently from everybody else. The unions, I am glad to say, have in recent years increased enormously in membership, in funds, and in power. It will be difficult to argue that this increase of power should not be accompanied by sane responsibility, and that the agents of the unions, when acting under the authority of their executive, should not be amenable to law."

These opinions had naturally great weight with the Government. It might be said that there was a prescriptive right and that for thirty years trade unions had enjoyed these privileges, and that therefore they ought to continue. But historically there was no foundation for that argument. In 1892 an action was successfully brought against a trades union, and we have declarations of the House of Lords to the effect that from 1883 onwards an action might have taken one of two forms—in both of which you would have given the claimant the right of redress from the funds of the union. And are we to found an Act of Parliament upon the hypothesis that an expression of opinion from the highest legal Court in the Realm is inaccurate and without authority? No, we are bound to recognise that there is some foundation for it.

But the real difficulty which some hon. Members feel, I fancy, is that under the state of the law as now administered, and as it must be administered even after this Bill is passed, if passed in its present form, trade union cases must come under the consideration of a Judge and jury. It is said that that is an unfriendly tribunal. I quite agree it is an unfriendly tribunal. But it is very difficult to say that because a claim, when it is enforced, comes under the consideration of a jury which is unfriendly, you are to enact that no suit shall be brought to obtain redress for conduct which violates a legal right or inflicts a wrong. In my experience at the bar, railway companies have complained that they never could get a verdict. I have heard landlords complain that they never could get a verdict from a jury of tenants. Newspapers used to say that they never could get a verdict of a jury in their favour. If a railway company had come forward and said that, because a jury always found against them, they ought not to be bound to give compensation for any negligence in the conduct of their business, we should have made short work of that contention. But opinion changes; it changes in society, and it changes in the jury box, and there is no reason why that regard which is certainly growing in respect of trade unions will in time grow with juries, and they will give just as much justice to trades unions as to every other section of the community. But the real argument is this: under the Bill as framed there will seldom be any question for a jury. I can with difficulty conceive a case in which the matter will not be determined as a matter of law. I can scarcely imagine a claim in which a question of fact for a jury will be raised. The real question for the House is—What is to be our future policy? Are we as a matter of legislation to-day to put all unions into a position of immunity, or are we to endeavour to prevent them from being the victims of injustice by so defining the law of agency that no unjust claim that can be lodged against them can succeed? The Government have tried to solve this question upon those lines. Whether they have succeeded it is for the House to determine. We are not dogmatists or pedants, and we do not claim exclusive knowledge or wisdom with regard to these questions. A more thorny problem for a Government to deal with has never arisen. We have done our best to solve it, and the House are entitled to consider whether our solution is worth their acceptance, or whether they prefer the method of which some hon. Members are in favour.

Let me summarise in a word or two what we contend is the result of this legislation. In the first place we remove the fetter which is placed upon the operations of these unions by the action of conspiracy. We give them permission, so long as they observe the law as it affects individuals, to carry out their own policy upon lines which commend themselves to their favourable consideration, and we allow them to know beforehand whether the conduct which they propose to pursue will or will not be in conformity with the law. In the second place, we restore and give legislative sanction to the exercise of the right of peaceful persuasion; and, in the third place, we so define and regulate the application of the law of agency as to obviate the injustice which I have indicated and given illustrations of. We do that first of all by giving to each of these unions an authoritative and articulate organ. We allow them to speak through some defined agent. We allow them to delegate their authority subject to certain restrictions. We give them the right to disapprove of or repudiate acts which have been done in their name but without their approval or sanction. I think that when this Bill is considered by the House, and dispassionately considered by every section of this House, it may be regarded as a satisfactory solution of a very complicated question. At all events it is an honest attempt to solve the question. We have sought, as far as we can, to do what we consider is justice to these organisations without inflicting injustice upon the community at large. It may be that the Bill will not commend itself to all sections of opinion in this House. It is very seldom that Acts of Parliament do, but it is undoubtedly the fact that some of the statutes which have been most successful have on their introduction offended Members on both sides. Compromise, however, is the genuis of politics, although it is a very unpleasant lesson to learn.

Well, whether or not this Bill is attacked by hon. Members immediately opposite to me on the ground that it goes too far, or whether it is attacked by hon. Members below the gangway on the ground that it does not realise their full expectations, at all events we feel that in bringing it in we have done our best, we have fulfilled our mandate. [Cries of "No."] We have, I say, discharged our duty, and if, on reflection, there are modifications which it is thought may be introduced, and if the House approve of them, in regard to the one branch of the measure about which there is difficulty, hon. Members may be assured that their views will receive the most careful consideration of the Government and will be treated with the respect to which they are entitled. Ultimately, however, the decision of the question must rest with the House. I am obliged to the House for having listened to me for so long in my endeavour to deal with a question which is intricate and complicated and not an easy one to present. I trust, however, that whatever shape this Bill may ultimately take, it will be regarded as an earnest attempt to place the control of these organisations on a more satisfactory legal basis.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the regulation of Trade Unions and Trade Disputes.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) admitted that the right hon. Gentleman had attempted to deal fairly and honestly with the question treated by the Bill. Whether hon. Members agreed with him or not they had to give him credit for attempting to face the position in a way which might commend itself to all the sections of opinion held by Members who constituted the Cabinet. So far as the third clause was concerned, it did not commend itself to him. This was not the first occasion upon which the House had discussed this matter. The question had been up twice previously. On the first occasion the Bill was carried by a majority of thirty-nine, and last session it was carried by a majority of 122. On the last occasion the Second Reading was carried by the united support of hon. Gentlemen who sat opposite. The Liberal Party and many gentlemen representing the Conservative Party voted for it, and the Labour representatives had hoped that a measure on the lines of their own Bill would have found a place in the Cabinet policy. Something had been said with regard to individual opinion, and no doubt two hon. Members in this House had stated their view of this matter in public. But when they took the opinion of the workmen they must take their opinions as being expressed by their votes, and they must not take the opinion of one man who might in his time have done his level best to persuade them to take a different course from that which had been pursued. Quite apart from the question of whether the majority of the Liberal representatives and those behind them had taken a different course, the Trade Union Congress was unanimous in dealing with this Bill. He would admit that they had not been idle at the last general election and there could hardly, he thought, be a Member of this House who had not had this subject brought before him. Trade unionists did not ask the candidates whether they were in favour of a Bill to deal with this subject, but they asked whether they were in favour of the Bill introduced by himself and others. So far as they could ascertain, an overwhelming majority had supported them at the general election. The hon. and learned Gentleman and others had supported them at the general election, and the hon. and learned Gentleman himself made a very definite pronouncement upon this question. He held in his hand a report of what the hon. and learned Gentleman said at Leeds, as published in the *Leeds Mercury*. The hon. and learned Gentleman went through the list of test questions framed by the Trades Union Congress, and in reply to each and all he gave an emphatic reply in the affirmative.

*SIR JOHN WALTON said he most carefully guarded himself from committing himself to any scheme, but explained that he had great sympathy with the suggestions which had been made. He had always said so, and he said so now.

*MR. SHACKLETON said the speech to which he was alluding was made upon rather an interesting occasion, because the hon. Gentleman was engaged in a three-cornered fight, and one of his opponents was a friend of his (Mr. Shackleton's) own. The fight being a three-cornered one, it was very important that the hon. Gentleman should be definite on this point. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that he could fairly toe the trade unionist line, and that was sufficient to show that he expressed his approval of the Bill put forward by himself and his friends. As to the historical part of the matter, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentlemen whether, if this Bill were referred to five or twenty years hence, they would be in order in quoting him as to what the Bill or Act intended. The effect of the Bill had been laid down by the hon. and learned Member, but they could not say what the judges might lay down twenty or thirty years hence, but they could quote the opinion of the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill thirty years ago, and it was decidedly in their favour. He said it was wrong, however good the intentions of hon. Members were, to put these disabilities upon trade unions. He thought that the course proposed by the Labour Members was a far more honest one than that adopted by His Majesty's Government. When they were told that it was their intention to remove from the trade unions all the liability, he thought it was a precipitate step. This Bill had been before the Trade Union Congress and they preferred to take the honest course of not seeking to obtain immunity by false pretences. Under this Bill the offiicals of the trade unions could do the very act about which complaint was made. As long as the Executive Committee said, "We did not authorise these acts and we are not prepared to take responsibility for them," they were released from liability. But what about the employers? If they could be put into the dock as the representatives of labour could be put into the dock, they would consider the question of responsibility. Did the House believe that no offences under these Acts had been committed by the employers in the last thirty years? Every act which the workmen had done had also in that period been done by the employers, and they had no remedy against them. It was a common thing, when the employees refused to withdraw their notice, for the employer to go to some person who had authority over them. In the weaving trade, with which he was connected, there were often in the same employment the father, the mother, and several of the children of a family. In many instances the father might be an overlooker, or be in some other position of authority, and it was the commonest thing in their trade disputes for the employer to go to such a person and say, "You have got to bring these people back to work, or you go now." What was their remedy? It was simply the individual remedy. The workman himself could claim damages to the extent of a fortnight's notice or a week's notice. Then he had done. The serious damage was not against the workman individually, but against the union to which he belonged. The Government must prove most conclusively that the employer could be made responsible for injuring the success of the workmen just as he could make the union responsible for injuring his success in a trade dispute. Unless the Government could put the employer and the workpeople on equal terms, they as Labour representatives would not be satisfied, because they held that it was a most dangerous principle to leave the workers absolutely at the employer's mercy in the questions of damages which arose. The trade unions could not prove damages, but nevertheless they existed, and, if not of a monetary kind, were serious inasmuch as they were connected with the position of the union in the district. The employer ought to be prepared to go into these labour wars when they occurred, and take the same risk as the trade unionists did. The trade union loss might not be a financial one, but all the same it was a serious loss to the individual workman and to the organisation to which he belonged. It was putting the trade unions in a serious position to say that they could be made liable for that kind of damages. As far as the portion of the Bill which dealt with conspiracy was concerned, they were perfectly satisfied with the broad principle that what it was legal for one man to do was equally legal if done by two or more persons. So far as regarded the remarks of the learned Attorney-General concerning peaceful picketing, he thought they would accept that part of the Bill, but before saying anything definitely on that point he and his colleagues would like to see the actual words in the Bill. They were told that if they accepted the course proposed by the Government, they were going to be free from a lot of law costs. He doubted it. He was not going to agree with one of his hon. friends who said it was a lawyers' Bill; they (the lawyers) were entitled to exercise their judgment in the matter as citizens. The three points suggested were all questions which would have to be fought out at law, which would have to decide whether they as trade unionists were guilty of this, that, or the other. If this Bill ever became law, there was a splendid field for some years to come for spending their money at a rapid rate. They were prepared as trade unionists to take up an honest stand, namely, that they were not in a fair position. Reference had been made to the Bill introduced in New South Wales by Mr. Wise. It was perfectly true the clause was read correctly, but it was only fair to point out that it was part of a whole set of legislation and before they thought of applying this particular New South Wales Act to workers here they must also consider the other Acts which were in force there. There was practically compulsory trade unionism in New South Wales, and it was not fair, therefore, to quote this particular Act when all the other considerations had to be taken into account. He wanted to put one question quite clearly to the Government. Did they propose to leave this an open question with the House? He thought it was a fair question to put. There was a considerable amount of feeling on this matter, and it had been carefully considered throughout the country. The Labour Party believed that the mandate which the Attorney-General referred to was a mandate for their Bill and not for the Bill now under discussion. He thought it was only fair to ask whether the House would have the power of deciding this matter without reference to Party connections in any shape or form, so that the question might be dealt with on its merits. But in any case the Labour Members would take the sense of the House on Friday on their Bill, and if the House decided in their favour, as it had done on previous occasions, then the Government would do well to leave the matter, complicated as it was, to the general feeling of the House. They would at all events be perfectly satisfied to stand or fall on that particular issue. Reference had been made to the Royal Commission. Let him at once say that they had repudiated that Commission from the first. They challenged its composition, which they considered was most unfair, and they took no notice of its recommendations. It had had opportunities of taking evidence from one side only, because the trade unionists had absolutely refused to recognise it or to give evidence at all. He trusted that whatever the decision of the Government might be as to what they thought was the reasonable and proper solution of this subject, at least they would recognise that in this matter it was a more serious question than simply a question of Party politics, inasmuch as it was a question which affected the great mass of the workers of the country.

*MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said he made no apology for intervening in the debate, because, as his hon. friends opposite were aware, he had had a large professional experience in connection with trade unions. He might also say that he yielded to no one in his anxiety to see a measure passed which would fully serve the interests of the trade unionists of the country. He thought that the Government Bill, so far as the question of picketing, was concerned, must have afforded satisfaction to hon. Members connected with the Labour Party. But he would remind hon. Members that a recent decision of the Court had laid it down in the clearest terms that peaceful picketing, even if going to the length of persuasion, was lawful, and therefore the Bill of his hon. friend was nothing more than declaratory of the law. In regard to the law of conspiracy, he thought also that his hon. friend's proposal, restated by him, met all the reasonable necessities of the case.

It showed that no action could lie in respect of conspiracy unless the thing which was said to have been done would be capable of being prosecuted as a criminal offence. That was a great step in the right direction, but he would remind his hon. friend that even though he might modify the law as to conspiracy in the direction of which he had spoken, at the same time it was quite competent for an employer of labour to bring his action directly for molestation, for interference with him in carrying on his work. Therefore he advised his hon. friends opposite not to anticipate too much from the change in the law which the Attorney-General had adumbrated on the subject. He could not help thinking that the speech of the hon. Member for Clitheroe represented a strong feeling of resentment against the Bill so far as it dealt with liability in respect of funds of the trade union for the acts of the union or its officials. His own view was a perfectly honest view, which he had declared to his constituents. He had said emphatically to his constituents that he did not agree with the Bill which was called the Trade Union Bill, but that he believed the Bill he brought in two years ago, and which was supported by almost every Labour Member in the House, was the best solution of the problem. That Bill declared that a trade union should be liable only for what was expressly authorised by its governing body. He appealed to his hon. friend opposite not to be too hasty in the opposition to the measure of the Government, although it might require Amendment. The limitations with regard to agency required amendment. He thought they must sweep away the doctrine of agency altogether in order to do justice, otherwise the Courts of Justice would manage to get round the corners and still find the funds of the unions liable. He believed his hon. friend opposite would agree with him in this proposition, that if the responsible governing body of a trade union deliberately decided that a wrong should be committed, it was only right and fair that the union should be responsible. [AN HON. MEMBER: [The individuals.] It was idle to say that the individuals should be punished. The real point was that the damage which was done should be brought home to the persons who had caused the damage to be done, and whenever they used their resources for doing wrong they should be amenable to civil action. That was an elementary proposition, he might say, of civilisation. It would be inconsistent with a state of civilisation that an organisation should have control of large resources and should solemnly invite certain instruments to commit a wrong and that these wretched instruments might be punished, but that the organisation which was the means of doing the wrong should go scatheless. That was a preposterous proposition, What was the grievance? It was not what the trade union itself did. If they looked back over the history of trade unions in this country for the past thirty years they could find hardly a single instance where a trade union had deliberately set itself to commit a wrong. That was a remarkable fact, and still more remarkable in the face of the further fact that they believed that they were not by law amenable if they did wrong. On the other hand, it should be remembered that there had been one or two cases where undoubtedly the union itself authorised the commission of acts which were only reasonably made the subject of an action for damages. He assured his hon. friends opposite that if he agreed with their views that absolute immunity were necessary to protect trade unions he would associate himself with them in this case. The real grievance was that the agents of branches and lodges should lose their heads, however rarely, sometimes, and trade union funds should be responsible. All men were liable to do it, and how much more likely it was that men who had not had a legal training should occasionally lose their heads in the conduct of a strike. Almost all those cases had been where an agent had committed a wrong and the funds of the union had been rendered liable for the wrong. If they said that a union should not be responsible for the acts of agents unless by its supreme council it had deliberately authorised those acts, they would get rid of what he conceived to be the real grievance of trade unions. He did not believe his hon. friends opposite or those on the Government side of the House desired that there should be inequality before the law as between trade unions and other classes of society. He appealed to them, as one with large experience in trade union cases and as one who was entirely in sympathy with them in endeavouring to protect unions, not precipitately to condemn the measure of the Government, because he believed that they—and it was creditable to their honesty—were promoting a Bill which was capable of being passed here, and which was not incapable of being passed in another place. He asked the House, with all sincerity, not too hastily to reject this Bill. Of course it was very easy to say, "Make the trade unions immune." It sounded very well on public platforms to say "I am in favour of making trade unions absolutely immune from responsibility." He tested that question at one of the largest meetings of miners held in his constituency. He took the trouble to explain the position to them. Hon. Members knew that the miners of the North of England were as intelligent and as capable of grasping a proposition as even a lawyer, and probably with as great honesty and natural common sense. He found that the opinion of that meeting was entirely in favour of a measure on the lines of the Bill which he brought forward two years ago. His Bill provided that if a trade union by its general council deliberately authorised a wrongful or criminal act it should be responsible. If trade unions were rendered immune in the way suggested by some hon. Members, there would be nothing to prevent any other organisation coming forward and saying, "You have granted this concession to trade unions; we demand equality before the law, and if you are not going to apply the ordinary doctrine of responsibility to trade unions you cannot to other organisations." He sympathised with the feeling of his hon. friends opposite, but he believed that the working-classes of this country were so instilled with the sense of justice that they did not want to evade their just responsibility, but they wished to be relieved from liability for rash or possibly wicked acts of men who did things which their unions did not authorise. The union fund was a fighting fund. [Cries of "No."] Really he did not think any responsible trade unionist would deny that. It was a fighting fund. [An Hon. Member: We do deny it.] It was a fund which was also used frequently for purposes other than fighting, according to the exigencies of the position, but the hon. Member who interrupted him knew that it was a fighting fund.

Sir EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): I do not think anybody can deny that it is absolutely necessary for the Government to bring in some Bill dealing with trade union disputes. The matter has now been before the House for several years and, as we were reminded by the hon. Gentleman who spoke below the gangway, Bills somewhat on the lines of the Bill adumbrated by my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General passed on more than one occasion the Second Reading in the last Parliament where there was a large Unionist majority. Therefore I think that no one can in the least find fault with the Government, whatever their views may be as to the ultimate settlement of the question, for introducing this measure. I go further, and I say that it is important that if a Bill of this kind is to be passed at all it should be passed by the Government on their own responsibility and not upon the introduction of a private Member. I do not think I am using the language of exaggeration when I say that I doubt if any Bill, in its bearing on the question of the relations of capital and labour, of employers and workmen, and on the general commerce and business of our country, in this or any other session, will be of equal or of greater importance. On the one hand, the manner in which you settle those questions which have arisen, and which are ripe for some settlement, may have a great deal to do in future with the extension of industrial enterprise by the necessary forthcoming of such capital as may be required. On the other hand, any settlement which may be come to must, in order to be satisfactory, be on fair grounds—because no other settlement would of course be final—not only to workmen connected with trade unions but to workmen generally. It is only by its being satisfactory that you can expect to avoid the conflicts in future between capital and labour which operate equally to the detriment of both. I am not going to be foolish enough upon this occasion, without seeing the Bill of the hon. and learned Gentleman, to commit myself to any very detailed criticism of the observations which he has made. A great man once said that if he were asked a question on common law, and was unable to answer it, he would be ashamed of himself; but if he were asked a question on statute law he would consider himself a fool to answer it unless he had the words of the statute before him. If I were to express entire condemnation or entire approbation—which I certainly could not do—of the Bill adumbrated by the Attorney-General, I think I would be playing the part of the fool in the tale I have just told. But I gathered three matters from the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I gathered, in the first place, that, although he protested in one part of his speech that it was the last thing he would like to do, in reality all through this Bill he was going to set up class privileges. I am not going to argue whether it is right or wrong in relation to trade unions for their particular constitution and the peculiar circumstances in which they stand either to claim or to have set up upon their behalf class privileges. But I think the House will agree with me when I say that if we are prepared to set up such class privileges, we ought to be careful for what reason we do it, and how far we may in doing so give reason to other bodies of equal importance, and very often under equal hardships by reason of the administration of the law, to claim similar privileges from this House. In addition to that, I gathered from the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman that this Bill will admittedly infringe upon the rights of many persons who are not members of or connected with trade unions at all. That is a very serious principle, which would certainly have to be watched, and we must see that it is surrounded by such restrictions as would mitigate as far as possible the infringement of the actual rights as they exist of those who are not connected with trade unions. And I gathered further that the hon. and learned Gentleman proposes by this Bill to give great powers to certain persons to injure others while they remain free from liability for doing such injuries. [MINISTERIAL and LABOUR cries of "No."] I shall show in a few minutes that that is so. If I am wrong, then my criticism will not be pertinent to the Bill. Well, if these are the principles to be deduced from the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman, I think it renders it all the wiser if I should only cursorily glance at the proposals he has submitted to the House. For, after all, in the carrying out of the principle, everything may depend upon the safeguards and limitations which, of course, it would be impossible for the hon. and learned Gentleman fully to explain to the House in bringing in a Bill of this kind. I did not quite follow the hon. and learned Member as to what it was he proposed in the case of an action for conspiracy. I do not understand whether he proposes to alter the law of conspiracy generally, or whether he proposes to alter the law of conspiracy merely as it relates to trade unions in trade disputes.

*SIR JOHN WALTON: We propose in effect though not in form to strike out the word "indictable" in the Act of 1875 and substitute the word "suable."

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Then I understand that, at all events, I was right in what I surmised, that as regards the law of conspiracy relating to civil matters — I am not referring to criminal matters — trade unions are to be put into a privileged position. The law is to be no longer applicable to them while it remains applicable to other sections of the community. What was the hon. and learned Gentlemen's definition of conspiracy? He said it was a combination to violate the rights of another, and I may take it that by his Bill the Attorney-General is going to lay down that a trade union may have the right as a combination to violate the rights of others.

*SIR JOHN WALTON: Only if the act, if done by an individual, might violate that right.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: Of course that comes within the definition given by the hon. and learned Member himself. If it is an injury to another that is done by a combination, although an illegal injury and although an injury causing damage, I understand that the trade union is to go scot free. I think hon. Members below the gangway who are very ready to criticise the Attorney-General on this Bill may, at all events, congratulate themselves that they have been put upon a high pinnacle of privilege —[Cries of "No, no!" from the LABOUR benches] — if they are the only people in this community who are to be allowed to combine to violate the rights of others. Surely it is some advance at all events upon the privileges that they already have. As far as I followed the argument of the Attorney-General, his only reason for doing that is that it has already been done in the cases of criminal indictment. I see a great distinction. As regards criminal matters the crime is complete when there is a conspiracy. As regards the civil action the conspiracy gives no rise to and no cause of action unless you have done damage in pursuance of the conspiracy to some individuals, and it is for the damage that the action is brought. Surely it is a strong proposition to lay down, even if the damage is done in pursuance of that conspiracy, that, of all the universe, trade unions alone are to be allowed to go scot free. We are allowing them to be free from the conspiracy and we are allowing them to go scot free for the damage that they have inflicted in pursuance of it. It does strike me, and I think it will strike anybody who has had practically to deal with these matters, that where the gist of the action is that damage has been done we ought to be very slow to say that the man to whom the damage had been done is to have no remedy. My hon. and learned friend gave some interesting illustrations of the butler, the cook, and the housemaid as to the conspiracy of persons against the employer. Yes, but no one in the House knows better than the Attorney-General the case of Leathem *v.* Quinn. If this alteration of the law is passed such a case as Leathem *v.* Quinn is without remedy. Leathem *v.* Quinn was founded upon conspiracy, and if it had not been for the consipracy there would not have been any case of action, and it would have followed exactly upon the lines of Allen *v.* Flood. I never yet heard any man in any section of the House defend what was done in the case of Leathem *v.* Quinn, where an employer was approached to turn men who were non-union men out of his employment and he said, "No, but I will tell you what I will do. I will pay their fines to the union. I will let them become trade unionists so that my men may be working exactly within the new rules." And the men for the trade union said, "No, that is not enough for us. They must be punished. They must walk the streets with their families and children for twelve months before they are allowed to be employed anywhere, and if necessary they must starve." That was an act of conspiracy. It was a conspiracy of those men going and insisting upon non-union men being driven out of employment. And I would like to know what will be the remedy after this Bill becomes law for a case which I call not merely a case of tyranny, but a case which is a disgrace to any Christian community, even in pursuit of those disputes which unfortunately raise at times most bitter feelings. I can only say for myself after the consideration that I have given to that question, that I look upon the abolition of that cause of action for conspiracy, having regard to the law that has been laid down in Allen *v.* Flood by the House of Lords, as in many cases depriving those who have been seriously injured of any remedy whatsoever in cases of trade disputes. We shall, however, see what the Bill says about the matter. But I understand the statement of the hon. and learned Member to have the results which I have suggested to the House, and they seem to me to be results which the House ought very carefully to consider when they came to the further stages of the Bill.

The next point upon which the Attorney-General spoke was the question of picketing. I do not quite understand what he intends to do with regard to that matter. So far as I know it has never yet been held that peaceful persuasion is illegal. I believe the law was perfectly properly stated by the Commission which investigated that matter when they said—

> "It is sometimes represented that workmen were punished for merely peacefully persuading, but that is not so. No workman has ever been punished under this Act for merely peacefully persuading. What he had been punished for is watching or besetting a house."

[Ironical LABOUR cheers.] Yes, but that is a different thing. [LABOUR cries of "Legal hair splitting."] But in what cases is he punished? If he watches or besets a house with a view to intimidating a man into doing something that he does not want to do or to keep him from doing something that he does want to do. That is very different from peaceful persuading. In fact the cheers of the Labour Members prove to me what I have always thought, that the question of peaceful persuasion is a matter of absolute hypocrisy. Peaceful persuasion is no use to a trade union. Certainly, so far as I am concerned, I have not the least objection to its being set up in black and white that a union has the right peacefully to persuade. But what the Attorney-General did not tell us was what is to be the limitation, for instance, to the number of individuals who were to go and peacefully persuade the workmen of an employer. The act itself and the way in which it was done might without a word being spoken be gross intimidation. Do not hon. Members see that if they can go and peacefully persuade and in some cases go and block up the door of the shopowner and collect crowds round they might honestly intend only peacefully to persuade, but at the same time they might be committing a nuisance.

SIR JOHN WALTON said they had taken from the Act of 1859 the qualification that the peaceful persuasion was to be carried out in a "peaceable and reasonable manner."

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The Committee suggested that so long as the action of the men was not calculated to cause reasonable apprehension of violence it was permissible, but my hon. and learned friend used words which makes it perfectly clear that "peaceful persuasion" may go further than that. Generally speaking, however, if words are contained in the Bill which make perfectly clear that peaceful persuasion means peaceful persuasion and will not be allowed to be carried further than that, I do not think he will find any opposition to that part of the Bill from the Opposition side of the House. We ought, however, to take care that nothing we do takes away the common law right of preventing a nuisance or allows this so-called peaceful persuasion to be merely a cloak or blind for approaching people and causing them terror, or for causing intimidation to those who may not be connected with trade unions. As regards the Taff Vale decision, the Labour Members have a right to speak no doubt for trade unions in this House, and I understand they claim absolute immunity for the funds of their unions, however bad the offence may be.

*MR. BELL (Derby): Or good.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: We are not concerned with the good; there are not likely to be actions for benevolent deeds. That claim of the Labour Party is a very wide claim, and I do not think it is a claim which they will find the Government at all likely to admit. Further I do not think it is a claim which the generality of people outside or inside this House will consider the Government ought to admit. I noticed that the Secretary of State for War who always thinks out every question has given a great deal of consideration to this question, and here is his criticism on it—

> "For a trades union to claim an exemption which neither a millionaire nor an individual labourer could assert a right to, would be to set up a claim of privilege, and this the trade unions are not likely to do."

The Secretary of State for War is so generally right that one cannot help feeling a kind of mild satisfaction that on this occasion his prophetic utterance is not true, because the trade unions are setting up a claim to this immunity. Setting apart what has been called the benevolent funds, as contra-distinguished from the militant funds of the trade unions concerned, if the law requires any alteration or any strengthening with a view to facilitating trade unions doing work of that character, I do not suppose any member of the House will object to it. That will be a highly proper thing to do. It will not be any privilege whatsoever, but it will be merely carrying out what is the ordinary law. Any such facility given to trade unions will be in perfect consonance with the law of the land, and so far as that is concerned I have said that Members of this side of the House will have no objection to it. But I understand that the Bill goes much further than that. I understand it is going to make havoc of the law of agency. The law of agency works in many cases with extreme hardship on individuals, but why are trade unions alone to be singled out to have those hardships remedied? I do not believe it is possible to change the law of agency as regards one set of persons and leave it as it is at present as regards the rest of the community. I have valuable support in that view from another member of the Government, who I regret is not present this afternoon. I mean the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has taken a great interest in that question. What is the right hon. Gentleman's view of the law of agency? He said that as regards agency he thought everyone would agree with him that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to provide a more restricted operation of the law in trade disputes than in the ordinary affairs of life. I do not know what has happened since the right hon. Gentleman spoke those words in 1903, but it may be that now the right hon. Gentleman sees some way of its being possible to do what he then thought was impossible. I think that when the matter comes to be thrashed out it will be seen that to alter the law of agency in favour of only one section—the trade unionist section—in this country will be a matter that on any logical principle it will be very difficult for the Party opposite to defend. The decision in the Taff Vale case was a decision absolutely in consonance with equity and in consonance with the general law of the land. I do not think the matter can have been better put than in the Report of the Royal Commission, which is one of the ablest documents as regards the attempt to elucidate this complex law ever laid on the Table of the House. With reference to the restriction of the law of agency which the Attorney-General proposes, the House can only criticise it when it sees his proposals in detail. I hope that when we see the Bill we shall not find it is a measure which, while preserving the semblance of keeping trade unions as regards their funds in exactly the same position as all other associations of people who commit wrong, will at the same time have the effect of putting such a network of difficulty round the reaching of the funds when the unions have done wrong as will render it practically impossible to carry out the ordinary remedies which people have under those circumstances. It is a Bill which may have far reaching results in the country to our trade and our industrial commerce. I can only say that I believe it will be our duty on this side of the House, while raising no unnecessary objections to a Bill of this kind, at the same time, as far as we can, to take care by such Amendments as we can propose that, while justice is done to those who are concerned with trade unions, there shall be no injury, no compulsion, and no coercion authorised towards individuals who may not be members of those organisations.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.) justified his intervention in this debate by the fact that he was a member of a trade union and a trade union official of the greatest federation of labour in the country, a federation which had suffered more from the law as rendered by the judges than any other. Having listened to the hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University, he could only express his gratification that whatever were the faults of the Government's Bill it was not a Bill introduced by a Government of which the hon. and learned Gentleman was a member. The trade unions of this country were not asking for any special treatment. They wanted no charity. They asked only for equality before the law with the employers. He asked the House to consider the case of peaceful picketing. The necessity for peaceful picketing arose from the action of the employers in scouring the country for men to take the place of those who were idle. Statements which were not true had been made over and over again by the masters, and as a matter of fact the poor men who were brought from other parts to take the place of those who were out had been as much deceived as anybody else. All that the trade unions asked was that they should have full liberty to explain to the strangers who were brought down the nature of the dispute between the men and the employers, and to ask them not to allow themselves to be made the tools of the employers to starve the workers out in the struggle between capital and labour. And, if they could prevail upon them to return, that the funds of the society should be used to pay their fares back to the place from which they came. Anybody listening to the hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University would think that the employers only had cause for complaint with regard to "conspiracy." What was going on in the country now? In South Wales at the present moment there was a strike in operation: a strike brought about by an alteration which had been made by the employers in the system of working. The trade union had used all its resources to bring about a settlement of that dispute. They had offered to go to arbitration, but for some reason best known to themselves, the employers had not thought it advisable to accept that offer. In the meantime what became of the workpeople? They had terminated their employment by the legal month's notice, but when they sought work elsewhere, they were asked where they came from. When the manager of the mine at which they applied found they came from the colliery at which work had been stopped he would not employ them. Was not that conspiracy? It was a very difficult matter to bring it home to the employers, but the fact remained that by means of the telegraph or the telephone, or by some other means, an understanding was arrived at by the coal owners that not a single man who had been employed by the colliery stopped should be given work in the area of the Coal Owners Association. In the whole of the annals of trade disputes there was no action on the part of the men which could be compared with this case which was within his own knowledge. With regard to the immunity of trade union funds, what was wrong with the request that the funds of trade unions should be immune? They did not ask that members of the union should be immune. If a member broke the law let him be punished according to the law. To that he quite agreed, but he submitted that neither this House nor the law courts had a right to allow people to put their hands into his pocket and penalise him if he had done no wrong, simply because a man who happened to be a member of the trade union broke the law. The federation of which he was a member had had to pay £80,000, because of the meaning given to the law by the courts of the land. In that case what did the federation do? The middlemen tried to reduce the price of coal. By means of combination the colliery owners were enabled to protect themselves, and the workmen found that their wages were being reduced by reason of the action which the middlemen at Cardiff were taking. The trade union came to the conclusion that it was necessary to make a stand against that. The action they took prevented the wages being reduced. If the men did wrong the employers had the means of redress in their hands. By taking action against the men for breach of contract they would have got just as much out of the workmen as they got out of the society by the action they took against them. At that time a new scheme of working was being initiated, and the employers proceeded against the society in order to break up the union, so that when the time came for discussing the new scheme the workmen should be helpless in the negotiations. The result was that the federation had to pay not only for the men in the federation but for men who were not. He accepted the statement of the hon. and learned Attorney-General that this Bill was an earnest attempt on the part of the Government to meet a very difficult problem, but he was bound to say on behalf of organised labour they could not accept it. They must have more. He appealed to the Government to take their courage in both hands and to carry out in this measure their obligations to the workers of this country. He asserted that hon. Members would not have been returned to this House if in many constituencies the workmen had not thought that by returning them they were taking some part in setting right the law with regard to trade unions which the courts had made wrong. He appealed to the House not to lend itself to proposals which, if placed on the Statute-book, would enable employers of labour to evade the law, to conspire and to do exactly what they liked, and which would make trade union funds liable for damage for acts not authorised by the trade union. They asked only for equal treatment before the law, and having asked for nothing more than that he took leave to say that this House ought not to expect them to accept anything less. He therefore applied to the Government to remodel this clause before the Bill came up for Second Reading, otherwise he, as a trade unionist representative, and his colleagues would be compelled to go into the lobby against the Government.

*Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said he was one of those who thought the claim put forward by one section of this House, by the accredited representatives of labour, was not one that should be entertained. After all, every Member came here as the representative of the whole of his constituents, and all had an equal right to their opinion on a measure which affected the working classes like this. He agreed with the Attorney-General that the condition of the law with regard to conspiracy was not in all respects satisfactory. The hon. and learned Gentleman had pointed out the uncertainty which existed—he thought necessarily if we were to have any law—but he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman had given sufficient weight to the other side of the argument. He dissented from the contention that an act done by 100 men did not differ from an act done by one man. Let them take for instance the case of a public meeting. A man might go to a public meeting and make observations and express dissent and no harm would be done, but if a third of the meeting took the same action it would become impossible to carry the meeting on. Let them take the words of the hon. Member for South Glamorganshire. The hon. Memhad said there was a conspiracy among the employers to exercise their rights harshly. If that could be shown to be the fact, then it was a pernicious thing for which a remedy should be found. If one employer dismissed a man from his employment, that was not the same thing as a number of employers agreeing together not to give a man employment.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda) said the case his hon. friend had referred to affected 1,300 men, not one of whom could find employment.

*Lord R. CECIL said that really made his case 1,300 times as strong, because instead of an injury done to one man it was an injury done to 1,300, not one of whom had any remedy. He used that argument simply to show that it was a fallacy to say that an act done by a number of men was no worse than the same act done by an individual. It might be that it was better to have a certain law, though it did not deal with all these questions, to an uncertain law which might or might not remedy all these evils. The matter certainly could not be left where it was. It might be that the learned Attorney-General preferred a statutory high-road to judge-made law, and might be able to devise a form of words which would be free from doubt and would settle the law definitely; but he would suggest that it would be very difficult to have a provision of the kind contemplated unless it was to apply to all classes of the community. If the law was right, and he thought it was on the whole, then no special exemption should be made in favour of trade unions. Nothing could be more harmless than peaceful picketing as described by some hon. Members when they spoke of workmen, attracted by the fraudulent devices of an employer, being rescued by the charity of their fellow-workmen from the evils they had been induced to encounter. But he did not find that the evidence before the Royal Commission put it that way. He put it to the House that it was perfectly well known that the watching and besetting a house was a cause of the disorder that took place during these unhappy industrial disputes.

In practice it led to breaches of the peace and to what he could only describe as tyranny. He therefore looked with some apprehension to the adoption of any measure which would legalise anything in the nature of watching and besetting a house. The Government appeared to be taking certain elaborate precautions to ensure that trade unions should be given a special position under the law of agency and should not be liable to damages unless they expressly authorised the act in respect of which they were claimed. Suppose a trade union took up a strike and provided funds for it, were they to be held liable for the action of their agents or not? The main point was, were the trade unions to be free from any of the ordinary provisions of the law of agency? He had never thought it possible to defend the law of agency logically. On what possible reason was he to be made liable for his coachman's getting drunk and driving into another carriage? Although the man had been warned particularly not to take too much to drink, yet if he did drive into another carriage his master was made liable. Take the case of railway companies: on what possible ground of reason were the shareholders made to pay for the act of a porter at a wayside station? Yet it was done every day.

MR. BRACE said a railway company had the right to sue, and that made all the difference.

*LORD R. CECIL said that in point of fact the shareholder was not rationally responsible, but that was the law of agency, and it had been adopted for excellent reasons. Unless the employer was made responsible for his servant, he would always be able to shelter himself behind some more or less colourable instruction to him not to break the law. That was why the law had adopted the principle of *respondeat superior*. Why should not that principle be applied to trade unions as well as everybody else? We were on the eve of great developments, particularly of an industrial and commercial character, which took the form more and more of substituting for the individual great corporations of enormous wealth and power. On the other hand they had these gigantic unions of the workmen. He did not in the least complain of the one or the other, but they had these two forces organised, not one against another but in order to arrive at a fair settlement of the conflicting interests. Were they going to say to one of those forces: "We are going to make a special exception and you are not to be liable for the acts of your agents"? The hon. Member for Clitheroe said they were not on the same footing at all. His argument was that practically trade unions existed for one purpose—for carrying on a strike—and if the employers were allowed by union among themselves to fight that strike it might be by illegal means, he believed the hon. Member suggested that the trade unions had no remedy by an action for damages because they would not be able to show any pecuniary damages. Therefore the employers were left with a remedy which was not at the disposal of the trade unions. The question was whether in point of fact damage had been suffered.

*MR. SHACKLETON: They have suffered damage.

*LORD R. CECIL said that if they had he knew of no provision in the law which would prevent them recovering whatever damages they had suffered. He would be very glad to consider and support a measure which would remove all taint of illegality from trade unions and make their contracts for all purposes as enforceable as the contracts of everybody else. If that were done then they would be in the same position as the employer if they suffered damage. They would be a legal association and they would be able to recover for the acts of the agents of the employer in just the same way as the employer could recover for the acts of trade unionists. He earnestly pressed the House not to make an exception, whether in the law of conspiracy or in the law of agency, on behalf of one special class or one special body, however many votes that class might command. Everyone knew that the reason why this Bill was introduced was that the Labour vote had very largely increased at the late election. He asked the House to guard the great principle of justice and equity which should rule all their legislation. If they gave this privilege one of two things must happen. The privileged body must suffer from the odium which all privileges excited and great injury would be done to the workmen themselves, or else they would have to extend that privilege to other bodies. He begged the House to be careful not to enact anything which they were not certain could be extended to all classes of His Majesty's subjects without great injury to all who were involved.

*MR. BELL said he joined with those of his colleagues who had congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the effort he had made in reference to this difficult question. He could endorse what had already been said by those who were qualified to speak in the name of organised labour in this country to the effect that the Bill fell short of what they desired. In reference to what the noble Lord had said, he appeared to believe that trade unions desired special legislation, or rather, special privileges. They desired no special privileges, but, recognising that there was nothing in this country to equal trade unions, they held that they should therefore have legislation that was suitable to the only organisation which existed. If trade unions were on the same basis or were constituted like public companies they would have no excuse for asking for legislation for themselves, but when they recognised that trade unions were voluntary institutions just as much as the Carlton Club or the National Liberal Club, and that men might belong to them or not, as they desired, it must be apparent that they could not obtain the control over their agents that organised institutions of other kinds could. Their branch secretaries were simply men who followed their occupations in whatever industry they might be employed, and they gave their time to act as branch or lodge secretaries. It was true that they might get some small fractional part of the contributions for the labours they gave, but to take that as being in the way of payment was an absolute absurdity. The unions did not think of it as such, and therefore they could not recognise that a man who volunteered to act as a branch secretary was one over whom they could have the control that an employer had over his inspector or foreman. Then, if they came to the other class of officials—and they were not in such large numbers as the Attorney-General thought they were—the great organisations of this country had not a large number of paid officials. If he spoke correctly and conscientiously he would say that they had not sufficient really in proportion to the strength of their organisation. But, however that might be, he was afraid that in this House, as in former Parliaments, there was a large number of Members who had not been able to appreciate, as he had hoped they would do, the fact that trade unions stood apart and distinct from any other kind of institutions, and it was in recognition of that fact that they asked for special legislation. The noble Lord apprehended that something desperate would happen if the Bill, as they desired, became law. It must not be forgotten that the Judges of this country, the employers, and the workmen all believed that this was the law up to 1901, and whether they were right or wrong in believing that, anyhow they never observed that any desperate tragedies occurred during the thirty years when they were under that misapprehension. He could not see any reason, therefore, why anybody should apprehend now that, given this charter which they were asking for, such tragedies would occur in the future. To say that they were asking to be privileged would be putting a wrong interpretation on their demand. They asked that they should be placed on an equality with the employers when they were in the unfortunate position of having to fight them. Everybody would admit that during the thirty-five years existence of trade unionism in this country the conditions of labour had materially improved, and happily that had been effected in many instances without resorting to a fight. But, be that as it might, they must be placed on an equality to fight the strongest employer in the country, if it should be necessary. Trade unions invariably endeavoured to arrange their differences by arbitration, and it was only in extreme cases that they resorted to a fight. He would suggest that trade unions were in a similarly unique position of life to the Army or the Navy. They had their Army and their Navy simply as institutions, which did nothing in times of peace. The foreign secretaries carried out their negotiations with foreign countries, and if they were unsuccessful in their treaties, the country was obliged to become either the aggressor or the defender. Then the Army or the Navy was brought into use, but when that happened no unnecessary restrictions were placed on those engaged in those forces. During the many disputes which had occurred in this country illegal acts had possibly been committed by individuals, and whether Parliament granted them protection as unions or not these acts would be committed in the future as they had been in the past. But these people had been dealt with by the common law and had had to suffer imprisonment for the offences they had committed. The Taff Vale struggle really was responsible for the manner in which the law was now interpreted. It was true a number of the Taff Vale men had been for a considerable time agitating for reforms, and while that agitation was going on the railway company, in order to injure the agitation, pitched on one of the leading men in their employ who was acting as a representative between the men and the company. Justice Wills in his summing up to the jury called special attention to the fact that the Taff Vale Railway Company in this instance had done the very thing likely to excite a body of men when the agitation was going on. Was there anything more likely to inflame workpeople than action of that kind? That was an act of annoyance and irritation by the employers in the first instance, fitted to inflame the tempers of the workpeople. The men came out without handing in their notices—or rather a number of them came out, because there were several grades concerned. Some required to give a week's notice, others a fortnight's, and when the strike actually took place some of the men were not entitled to give notice, some had only worked a week out of the fortnight, and others had not given notice at all. A certain number had committed a breach of contract, and here was where the union he represented came in. An appeal was made to the committee to come to the rescue of these men. The committee condemned the action of the men in resorting to the dispute without tendering their legal notices, and recognising also what might happen if men were allowed to go on in their own way without anyone looking after them, the committee resolved by a majority of one out of thirteen that they would take the men under their wing, try to get them under control and settle the dispute. The organisation and his committee did it ostensibly to try to keep the men under control and to settle the dispute in the interests of the men, the employers, and the public. Three days prior to the strike taking place he was asked by the late Lord Ritchie, who was then President of the Board of Trade, to go down to try and settle the dispute. He went down and found that the men were acting in defiance of the organisation and of himself. They practically told him to mind his own business and not to interfere with them. There was nothing more to be done and he returned to London. His committee, looking to the temper of the men and feeling that much greater danger would occur if they were left alone than by having some control exercised over them, decided in the circumstances to take charge of them. That was one of the things which was held to be illegal on the part of a trade union. They were held to be doing wrong when really they were doing a service both to the company and the public. During the progress of the strike the employers, as in all other instances, did not hesitate to use all kinds of machinery to find men to take the places of those with whom they were in conflict. Men were brought from all parts of the United Kingdom. On one particular occasion the agents of the Free Labour Association in London were paid 30s. a head for men secured for the Taff Vale Railway. These agents were not particular where they got their "heads." On one occasion the 9.15 train from Paddington had two saloons attached carrying thirty-eight of these heads. Several of them were obtained from Holloway and Brixton prisons, and the others from street corners, "pubs," and any other places where they could be got. The agents of the association entered into contracts with these men to work for the

Taff Vale Railway Company. The men had their passage paid, they were supplied with drink, and some of them had had a drop or two when they reached Cardiff. He was at Cardiff station when they arrived. The railway company had an army of policemen there. There were two policemen for every "blackleg." He approached these men at the carriage window, and the police were looking on and listening to what he said. The agent of the Free Labour Association was also there, so that there was no intimidation on his part. So far as he was concerned it was perfectly peaceable persuasion. He told them the circumstances and persuaded them with all his power not to work for the Taff Vale Railway Company. Some of the men said they were told that there was an extension of the Taff Vale railway, and that owing to the opening of branch lines a large number of men were required. He could believe that the agents of the employers in the circumstances were not particular what they said in order to persuade the men to make contracts. The men said to him that they had no money to go back, and he stated that if they decided not to work for the Taff Vale Company he would pay their fares back, and see that they were supplied with refreshments until they could get back. This offer was accepted by thirty-two of the men who came out of the saloons. He treated them just as liberally as the Taff Vale Railway Company had done. For doing that it was held that he had committed an illegal act; the men had been persuaded to break their contracts, and he was placed under restraint by injunction from doing such a thing again. He admitted at once that unless they had power peacefully to persuade in that manner, and if they thought it necessary even to pay the fares of men back to the homes whence they came, they could not conduct a strike as it ought to be conducted. It should not be forgotten that men on strike were fighting after they had failed by negotiation and argument, and therefore they must not be hampered any more than the employers. Those who had for a number of years been conducting the affairs of trade unions knew the difficulties with which they had to contend. They knew the underhanded methods which employers indulged in. He would not deny to employers the rights and liberties which the workmen claimed for themselves. He would not deny an employer the right to go to Holloway gaol tomorrow morning if he wished to take into his employment those who were released from prison. But he claimed on behalf of those engaged in a conflict that they should have the right to persuade the men to go back home, and to treat them as liberally as the employers did when supporting their claim. The question of agency was really most difficult in these circumstances, and he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would recognise that all the argument about giving a privilege to trade unions overlooked the fact that trade unions were not analogous to any other institutions. For that reason it was absolutely impossible to legislate for trade unions and other institutions at the same time. Trade unions must be the subject of special legislation. They were asking no favour when they asked that a certain power should be conceded to them when they were engaged in a fight with the employers. In his opinion if the trade unions were restored to the position in which everyone believed they were before the Taff Vale decision, that would bring about conciliation boards and other means of settling disputes. Surely there was no hon. Member who believed that the representatives of trade unions would deliberately injure other people. They must not deny that perhaps one of the main results of trade unions engaged in a conflict was to injure some one. They must injure the employer if they were engaged in a conflict. One of the two parties in the conflict must be injured unless they could come to a sensible arrangement. It was no use for anyone to say that they engaged in a strike without intending or hoping to injure anyone. When engaged in a strike the workmen intended to injure the employer and the employer intended to injure the workmen. He did not mean unfair injury. A strike must injure the employer in his business, his profits, and the progress of the industry for the time being. It was not denied and they could not escape the fact that they were injuring the employer when they engaged in a conflict. What was the employer doing? He was determined to injure the workmen by preventing him from earning his livelihood to the extent he was entitled to. Trade unions were therefore entitled to special legislation. The hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to a speech which he had made at the Trade Union Congress in 1903. He believed that that quotation was substantially correct. But at that time the Congress was discussing the Trade Disputes Bill which was introduced into Parliament in the succeeding session. He, like other people, in the right place and at the right moment, liked to have all opinions on all questions thoroughly threshed out in order that a correct conclusion might be arrived at. But the Trade Union Congress came to a unanimous decision contrary to the view he had taken, and therefore the opinion of the Trade Union Congress ought to be taken and not his own personal view. He wished to make that explanation in order that no one should run away with the idea that, although there were two sections of labour in this House, there were two sections opposed one to the other on this particular question. He thought it would be wise to allow the First Reading of this Bill to go through, and leave this question for the moment open. The Government would have an opportunity on Friday of hearing the views of the Labour Members on this point in the debate on the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for Newcastle; and he hoped that the Government would allow all hon. Members a free hand in voting for or against that Bill. He trusted also that the Government would accept the decision of the House in regard to that Bill, and that they would be able to amend the Bill now under discussion in accordance with the decision then arrived at. He was sure that hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House would not be prepared to allow a jury of trade unionists to try a trade union case. And trade unionists had as little confidence in allowing a body of men interested in industries and employment to try a case in which they were concerned. What the Labour Members wanted was to prevent any litigation or possibility of litigation against trade unions as trade unions. There might be as much litigation as hon. Gentlemen liked against individuals who were so foolish as to commit violations of the law in any respect. During the Taff Vale strike he believed that twelve or fifteen men were imprisoned for offences which they had committed; but they did not complain. The law was vindicated and they bore the brunt. But why should the trade unions pay damages when they had no control over individuals? There was nothing to prevent a trade unionist striking the Attorney-General that night when he left the House. The law would protect the Attorney-General. But if there happened to be a strike on at the present time, the trade union would have to pay damages for that assault. Trade unionists did not want such a differentiation, because it was largely based on prejudice. He thought the Government would be wise to accept the principle of the Bill which had been endorsed by large majorities in two sessions of Parliament. If they did so, they would give general satisfaction and afford no cause of complaint to any decent employer of labour.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District) said that the discussion had so far been confined to representatives of the Labour Party and to members of the legal profession. He wanted, very respectfully, to ask the Government to emphasise the point made by the Attorney-General as to their intention of leaving the decision in regard to Clause 3 to the free and unfettered judgment of the House of Commons. Because, if they did not, many hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House would be put into a very serious difficulty. Certainly a great many of them during the general election positively declared—at least he did—that if returned to Parliament they would do their best to recreate the *ante* Taff Vale situation. He was quite certain, speaking from experience, that that was what the public expected. The Government had gone a long way—and they all welcomed the steps they had taken—in order to meet the difficulties of the situation and the hopes of the trade unions in that regard; he should have been glad, however, if they had seen their way to go a little further. But if the question of agency was defined as proposed it would be capable of evasion; and was it not much better to say that trade unions were entirely free from liability to damages than to put them in the position they now occupied? He was quite aware that the Attorney-General had developed a powerful legal argument against the course suggested by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Of course, the legal mind was not symmetrical, but ordinary people were not so much concerned with law as with policy. As to policy, he thought it would be unfortunate if the Government persisted in the line they had taken. Hon. Gentlemen in the course of the debate had frequently alluded to the question whether trade unions should or should not occupy a privileged position. He did not know whether the position which trade unions claimed to occupy was or was not privileged; but whether it was so or not it was no wild experiment on which they wished to embark, They only asked to be put back into the position which they had occupied for the greater part of the last thirty years. During that time trade unions had worked well and had not injured the industries in which the workmen were engaged. A point to be remembered was that the position of the masters was unassailable, it being in practice well known to be almost impossible for the trade unions to prove conspiracy or injury, because the masters came to their decisions in private; whereas the men needed a great amount of publicity to bring about the results which they aimed at. The law of agency was not in itself very satisfactory, and it was only to be defended on the ground that it was an equitable expedient, but if the equity between unions and men did not exist, surely there was no reason for pressing on this occasion the law of agency. What they were concerned with was not so much the small legal points which were raised but the way in which this House was prepared, as a matter of policy, to treat trade unions as a whole. He did not know that the Bill placed trade unions in a privileged position, but if it did he was not prepared to reject it on that ground. He was prepared to place trade unions in a position in which they could bargain with capitalists. He did not think trade unions would injure industry, and if the trade unions were placed in a position in which they would be able to make their own terms with employers, the House would be justified in refusing to interfere with questions of wages and the hours of adult labour. They heard a great deal now-a-days about the distribution of wealth. If there was to be a better distribution of wealth, it was at that stage that the distribution should take place. Distribution should take the form of fair wages and not of philanthropic effort. Many members of trade unions had said to him that they would infinitely prefer to be in a position to obtain good wages than have anything in the nature of old age pensions. Surely it was more manly to equip them to obtain what they were entitled to have and then to leave it to the individual to make some provision for old age. He hoped before the Second Reading was reached the Government would be in a position to make a pronouncement with regard to the third clause, otherwise he felt certain many hon. Members would be in the same difficulty as himself. He should very much regret if they were unable to support the Government in the course they intended to pursue.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) assured the hon. Member for the Cardiff District that there was no monopoly on any side, or in any part of the House, of sympathy and good feeling towards that progressive usefulness in the trade unions which had won for them a growing recognition at the hands of Parliament. He also assured the hon. Member for Derby that he did not wish to put a stop to his exercising in all possible ways those arts of persuasion which had won for the hon. Member the excellent position he held in the House of Commons. It was true that the hon. Member ought to find obstacles in his way when he tried to persuade men to break their contracts, but the discussion of such matters had not been much furthered by the explanation of extreme cases. The Attorney-General had referred the House to a case of which he did not give the name, but which was another of these extreme cases. For his part, he did not want to stop the practice of sending men to meet workmen in order to exercise, by lawful means, persuasion; and he said that as part of the general position of many of those on the Opposition side of the House, who were in great sympathy with all legitimate efforts to make clear the law and to remove from trade unions some undoubted grievances that they had. It was right, however, that they should bear in mind that the substantial majorities by which even the late Parliament read a second time the Bill known as the Trade Disputes Bill were secured largely in consideration of the promise made in the course of the debate that there should be fair consideration given to Amendments moved in Committee. There were certain elements in our law which always would vitiate contracts and proceedings, such as force, fear, and fraud. He hoped that no alteration in our laws by the removal of these disabilities and qualifications would ever make it possible for any improper or vicious agencies to be put into operation. Trade unionists held that they had a difficulty in finding how they were to use persuasion without intimidation; but other people met with the same difficulty, and he thought trade unionists ought to submit to the same kind of difficulty that every one of the King's subjects had to meet. As regarded the Bill before the House, he reminded hon. Members that the clause foreshadowed by the Attorney-General as to picketing was not that which was brought to the attention of the country during the recent election. If the contention was sound that at the recent election the country pronounced for the Bill known in the last Parliament as the Trade Disputes Bill, the whole of that Bill and nothing but that Bill ought to be brought before the House. But that was not what the country was getting, with regard to the picketing clause, from the Government on the present occasion. He thought, however, that hon. Members below the gangway were wrong, and that the country pronounced in favour of the removal of some of the difficulties from which trade unionists suffered. As to the action of the Government with regard to the law of conspiracy, he did not complain, considering the finding of the very able Royal Commission. He thought the Government would have done wisely if they had adopted the qualification recommended by that Royal Commission; but if they were going into the question of conspiracy, it opened up an interesting question. Labour Members complained that they suffered from disadvantages because they suffered in a way that employers did not. They said it was no use for them to sue employers for damage done to their cause, because trade unionists could not prove damage. Well that was true. In such cases, where funds were not actually depleted, it would be difficult for a trade union to say that they suffered pecuniary damage. What he wished to draw attention to was that if they relaxed the law of conspiracy they had also to consider whether in so doing they were not themselves facilitating those very actions on the part of the employer of which they complained. He hoped, therefore, they would not do anything which would make more easy what had been done by employers in this country by their concerted refusal to employ men who had given them offence in former disputes. As to trade unions' funds, it could not be seriously contended that the exempting of trade unions was not a very striking instance of the creation of a privilege. Labour Members might probably hold that in past times trade unions had not enjoyed all the popularity that their legitimate objects entitled them to. The feeling then on the part of the public was that too much intimidation was allowed to creep into their proceedings. In the same way, he was convinced that their popularity with the public would suffer if they permitted to be granted in a Bill from Parliament anything like unjust privileges. Such privileges might have to be repealed by a future Parliament. The Government had done well in limiting the grant of immunity in regard to actions for damages against trade unionists. Even now they were going much nearer to the wishes of the Labour Members than those gentlemen were aware of, because, so far as he could see, they would have nothing but the words "*bona fide*" as a protection against bogus repudiations and calculated prohibitions. The Government had done a service by attempting a solution of this very difficult question, and he hoped that ultimately it would be settled upon lines which would tend to the peaceful settlement of disputes, which would preserve and, if necessary, extend the fullest liberty of combination amongst the working classes, and, above all, secure on the part of all the fullest possible equality before the law.

*Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) thought that every Member of this House who was in sympathy with trade unionism would repudiate the statements of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin as to the futility of peaceful persuasion in case of strikes. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had been on the side of law and order elsewhere, but he would venture to say that if the right hon. and learned Gentleman were present that he had been on that side in a turbulent sort of way. He represented a very turbulent constituency, and ought not to apply to the working men of this country the standard which would properly measure his own turbulent condition in the mind of the constituency he represented. Those who knew the working classes of Great Britain were quite willing to give them the power of peaceful persuasion with every hope and confidence that they would use it in a manner beneficial to both themselves and the country. This particular class, one would think, was being legislated for in an exceptional manner and for the first time. What he said in reply to the right hon. Gentleman would also apply to what had been said by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone. They were not enacting an exceptional law for the first time, they were not repealing an exceptional law; they were extending by an act of legislation an exceptional law already in existence. Not only in respect of employers was this law exceptional, but also with regard to the members of the trade unions themselves. He referred the noble Lord to Section 4 of the Act of 1871, where he would find that members of the trade unions had no remedy as between themselves.

Lord ROBERT CECIL: It is precisely that provision which might very fairly be repealed.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR said they were not here for the purpose of repealing that exceptional law, but for the purpose of extending it because of exceptional circumstances. This law had been passed to interfere with the common law of the land and it had also interfered with the law of conspiracy. He had risen specially for the purpose of stating that while those with whom he acted in the House intended to support the introduction of this Bill, and probably to vote for its Second Reading, that fact would not prevent them from also supporting the more extensive measure that would be introduced next Friday by the hon. Gentlemen who sat on the benches near him. They would do so because they believed these funds were subscribed for a particular purpose and they ought not to be ear-marked for damages in consequence of any action on the part of others. He desired to address a Question to the hon. and learned Gentleman who had introduced the Bill. The Attorney-General had said that there were great areas in the juridical map of Great Britain through which he wished to drive a highway in respect of the law of conspiracy. Did he intend that that alteration in the law should extend generally to the law of conspiracy so as to embrace a certain state of things that prevailed in the country which he (Mr. O'Connor) represented in Parliament? He trusted that at all events the title of the Bill would enable them to move an Amendment that would extend the law of conspiracy generally, because although it had been laid down by many speakers in the debate that the law of conspiracy should be so altered as to apply only to trades unions, there were cases of great hardship in Ireland where, if the law was not generally extended, the present state of things would continue. At present it was quite legal for a man in Ireland to decline to pay his rent to his landlord if he regarded it as an exorbitant rent, but if, say after Mass on Sunday he should meet his neighbours outside the church, and if they should hold a meeting and pass a resolution that instead of this one man declining to pay his unjust rent to the landlord they should all decline to pay such rent, they at once came within the scope of the general law of conspiracy. Quite recently there had been prosecutions, and men had been sent to prison because they decided to do collectively what one man could do without any punishment whatever. Would not the Attorney-General take this opportunity of so framing the clause with regard to conspiracy as to comprehend within its scope the kind of case he had mentioned. Surely a body of men who were federated together with a view to bring about a better state of things were as much entitled to protection as the trade unionists themselves. He hoped that the Members who directly represented labour in the House would help them to have that clause regarding conspiracy so framed as to bring the Irish farmer, and the various classes who were at present open to attack through the unfair operation of the law of conspiracy, within its scope.

*MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.) desired to associate himself with the appeal to the Government made by his hon. friend the Member for Cardiff. No case could possibly have been put before the House with greater ability than had been shown by the Attorney-General, but it must have been as much apparent to the hon. and learned Gentleman himself as it was to everybody else that the House was not with him in his arguments. Therefore, he (Mr. Norman) joined in the appeal to him and the Government to put themselves right at the earliest possible moment with what was obviously the feeling of a very large majority of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that the Government felt that they had a mandate. It was true they had a mandate, but so far as he had been able to understand the recent political situation, it was not a mandate to bring in a Bill of the kind introduced this afternoon. The mandate which was given to himself and to others on the Ministerial side of the House was quite different. It was a mandate to act in that particular instance, in the true sense of Conservatism—to go back to a good old law which had unexpectedly been found to be inoperative. It appeared to him that the time for arguments had almost passed, but if one desired to argue it would be easy to comment on several points of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech. He spoke, for instance, of the necessity for checking the abuse of power on the part of trade unions. He (Mr. Norman) ventured to say that the history of trade unionism in the past was not a history of the abuse of power.

SIR JOHN WALTON: I did not say it.

*MR. NORMAN was sorry if he had misrepresented his hon. and learned friend, but he understood him to say that one of the objects of the Bill would be to check the abuse of power. He certainly drew rather a terrible picture of what might happen under certain circumstances—a picture which he (Mr. Norman) ventured to say with all respect was hardly historically accurate as regarded trade unionism in this country. The hon. and learned Gentleman further said, if he correctly understood him, that if this Bill became law he could scarcely conceive a case arising to go before a jury. If that were so, it seemed hardly necessary to pass such a very important law, involving so much that was novel and raising so many points which vitally touched a very large part of the community. The framers of the Bill appeared to be under the impression that, supposing a trade union deliberately decided and intended to commit an illegal act, they would thereupon immediately authorise some agent to go and do it. Human nature being what it was, it appeared to him very obvious that in the unlikely event of a trade union contemplating an illegal act it would not hand to some agent formal authority to do it. He felt quite confident that if an illegal act were committed it would be found that it was a wholly unauthorised act. The Bill, therefore, even in what it proposed to bring about, was likely to break down at its most vital point. It was often said that the charge that the organisations of working men were treated unfairly as compared with those of capitalists was not justified. He himself believed it was obviously true, and if further evidence of that were wanted it would be found in the appointment of the late Royal Commission. If that was not an example of unfairness he did not know where to look for one. The Government claimed that they had a mandate. On the other hand, he and most of the Members of the Liberal Party, had a mandate to act entirely contrary to the spirit which proposed to pass this Bill. He was pledged to the hilt to restore the position which existed before the Taff Vale decision. He had not pledged himself without long and careful consideration. He had declared and defended his attitude a score of times upon the platform; he had voted for it in the House; he had asked for a mandate and had received it. He was morally and inevitably bound to obey that mandate, even though it brought him, with the deepest regret, into direct conflict with the authorities of his own Party.

*MR. W. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District) said that, in common with a good many other Members of the House, he was pledged to support the Bill which went by the name of the "Shackleton Bill." It was put to him distinctly at the general election whether he was prepared to support that Bill and he had pledged himself to support it. Although he was very sorry to come into conflict so early in his political career with his respected leaders, he was there to carry out that pledge. He gathered that a good many other Members who were as loyal to the Government as he was were as deeply pledged to support a measure of that sort and were prepared to do so. He had not given that pledge hastily without inquiring into the circumstances. There could be no doubt that the intention of the Legislature in 1871 was that trade unions were not capable of being sued. The Report of the Minority of the Trade Union Commissioners of 1869, which, according to Lord Macnaghten's judgment in the Taff Vale case, formed the basis of the 1871 Act, recommended that unions should not be capable of being sued as corporate bodies. Mr. George Howell, who was for many years a Member of this House, in the preface to his book on Trade Union Law, said that he could speak with some authority on the intention of the Legislature—

"In my interviews with the then Home Secretary," he said, "the question of empowering trade unions to sue and be sued was often and often discussed. Some few were in favour of embodying such power in the Trade Union Bill, but the vast preponderating opinion was averse to it. Any provision of that nature was intentionally left out; the Home Secretary being quite as strong on that point as Messrs. Hughes, Mundella, Hinde Palmer, Serjeant Simon, and, so far as my memory serves me, the late Lord Coleridge."

That intention was supposed to be expressed in the Act of 1871, and practically for thirty years this country had had experience of what would happen if trade union funds were not to be made liable in the way they had been made liable by the legal decision. What had been the result? So far as he knew no bad results had occurred at all. No injustice had been done, and it was a well-known fact that trade unions and unionists were most anxious to suppress disorder. He could not conceive why bad results should be expected to occur in the future after thirty years experience in which no bad results had occurred. He felt morally pledged to his constituency, and he felt also he should be acting in the best interests of all classes of the community by availing himself of the liberty of action which he understood the Government gave them of expressing an opinion in favour of Mr. Shackleton's Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to provide for the regulation of Trades Unions and Trade Disputes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Solicitor-General.

TRADE DISPUTES BILL

"To provide for the regulation of Trades Unions and Trade Disputes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 134.]

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [27th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

*SIR H. AUBREY-FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) said he did not see the hon.

Baronet the Member for South Somerset in his place. He was very anxious to make some remarks in connection with the Bill, and to put one or two Questions to the hon. Baronet in order to satisfy himself and his constituency as to the character of the Bill. He should like to ask whether it was a Bill taken up from the remainder of the Bill brought forward in last session of Parliament by the previous Government or an entirely new Bill. There were many classes of people interested in this; not only farmers, but cake merchants and seed merchants, and even chemists were interested in it. Last session he received many letters from these professions and industries calling his attention to the Bill then brought forward, and which, unfortunately perhaps, the time did not permit to be passed into law.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL. [BY ORDER.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster) said his objections to this Bill would not take long to express, for the reason that since he put his Motion for its rejection on the Paper the railway company had circulated a document among Members of the House which made it much easier for him to explain his motives. That document said that the Company noticed two notices of Motion for the rejection of the Bill had been put on the Paper, and the Company understood that one was in relation to the objections taken to the boring operations in which the Company were engaged on their own property adjoining Carshalton Station. He desired the House to understand that, while the assurances the Company now gave in that regard were largely satisfactory to him they did not affect, in any degree, the reasons why he ventured to object to this Bill. He contended that if a company possessing a great monopoly came to Parliament for powers with regard to their ordinary business, with which he had no desire to interfere, it was within the province of this House to review the position and contemplate whether that particular company had avoided or evaded the law or had arrogated to itself powers which, in the ordinary understanding of the words, its monopoly did not give it. In that sense he objected to this Bill. When he found a company like the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company indulging in matters which had very little to do with their ordinary business he considered it was quite proper to bring it to the notice of the House. It was well understood by the precedent of the Wolverhampton Bill that it was not permissible for any water undertaking to secure water in one district for the benefit or use of another district if it could be shown that the district from which the water had been obtained was likely to require it. They had within their own knowledge the Report of the Commission, of which Lord Balfour of Burleigh was the President, which laid it down that no water ought to be taken out of the Surrey district. It was specifically stated that it should remain there for the benefit of the locality. The next point upon which he wanted to lay stress was that in all the recent municipal undertakings of Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and other places, it was an accepted condition and Parliament insisted that if water was taken from one district to be used in another district the people along the route should have the right to tap the supply and take what they required from it. There was a third well-accepted conclusion which Parliament had adhered to, that no one district should take water from another if they could get water inside the district in which it was desired that the water should be used. This company absolutely sought by its monopoly rights without coming to Parliament to violate every one of these three conditions, and he ventured to maintain that it was altogether foreign to the work of a railway company to be allowed to use monopoly rights granted to it for one purpose to secure competitive rights with other statutory companies. It was for this reason that he made his objection. Since he had put his Motion on the Paper he had had the opportunity of having a conversation with the representatives of the company. That interview was not at all satisfactory. He then had the advantage of representing his arguments to the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade with a much more beneficial result, because the effect of his remarks to that gentleman apparently was that the Brighton Company were ready to acknowledge his contention and to bind themselves down to use this water within the district in which they raised it. He asked the House to bear in mind that although it was apparently a small matter it was a point of far-reaching character. It meant that when a great monopoly and statutory company came to Parliament only mentioning certain of the things which they required, if this principle which he put forward was accepted, it would be in the power of every humble individual to object if the company were not doing their duty in every respect. He was perfectly willing to withdraw his opposition if the assurance given to his hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade was carried out, and if it was put into official language that the Brighton Railway Company would not use water which they were raising at Carshalton outside a radius of six miles from the place at which they brought it to the surface.

*MR. WARDLE (Stockport) said the objects which led him to put down the Motion on the Paper had now been largely attained, and he did not propose to go into them at any length. He did, however, desire to make one or two observations on the matter. It was said by the promoters of this Bill that its main object was the authorisation of certain widenings and alteration of its main or branch lines. If that had been all he should have raised no objection to its passing in the ordinary course. But it was what was called an Omnibus Bill An Omnibus Bill was a favourite device for getting certain little concessions through Parliament which it would be impossible to get by any other means. These other objects were masked under the statement, "The Bill also contains other powers of a miscellaneous character." By means of these miscellaneous clauses, railways had succeeded in passing through this House many Bills granting powers—and very wide powers too—in regard to pension, provident, and other funds, which had been given to few, if any, other corporations. They had also been permitted to extend the scope of their operations in a manner which had not always been to the public interest. Notably was this the case with regard to canals. The plea put forward of finding employment by the carrying out of new works did not absolve the House from the duty of examining closely every such Omnibus Bill, and especially the new powers sought by great monopolist corporations. It was precisely because of the miscellaneous powers asked for in this Bill that he put down the Motion to oppose the measure. A further statement was made that the Bill was of a very ordinary character and raised no questions of any general importance. What was it the Bill proposed to do? First it asked for very large and comprehensive powers in regard to omnibuses—

> "The company may provide own work and use in connection with or in extension of their railway system or otherwise in any district to which their said system affords access omnibuses coaches cars and other road veheicles to be drawn or moved by animal power or electric or any mechanical power and may therein convey persons luggage parcels and goods whether to and from any of their stations or otherwise and may make and recover charges in respect of such conveyance and may enter into contracts or agreements with any company or person for the supply or working of any such omnibuses coaches cars and other road vehicles and may apply their corporate funds to the purposes aforesaid or any of them."

This clause as it stood proposed to confer very great powers indeed. It proposed to allow the company to compete within its district with all other road carrying firms whether they carried passengers or goods. Such a proposal might have developed into a great monopoly and acted seriously against the public interest. Since he had put down his Motion, however, he had seen representatives of the company, and he was assured that a new clause had been drafted which would take the place of the clause he had just read. If that were so the new clause would be satisfactory to him, and he would withdraw his opposition with regard to the omnibuses. But it only serves to show with what great care Bills of this kind should be scrutinised by this House. The next point which he objected to was the clauses with reference to the promotion of a guarantee fund, and here again it was not so much to the principle of the fund that he objected to as to the very wide powers which were sought under the Bill. On these, too, the company have now agreed to insert a clause which defines and limits these powers and this clause largely disposed of the objection he raised, which objection had reference to dividing the funds after a certain period of three or five years as the case might be. The company now agreed that the fund should be divided among the men, and with that he was perfectly satisfied. He thought it right, however, to say that in his opinion they should go further and return all contributions to men who left the service with clean and honest records during the intervals between such divisions. There was only one other thing to which he objected, and that was the clause raising the fares between Newhaven and Dieppe. He commended that part of the Bill to the Board of Trade who he thought had a duty to perform to the public in looking into that matter. In 1862 a Bill was passed through this House granting to this company powers to charge for first class accommodation between Newhaven and Dieppe the sum of 13s., for second class, 9s. 6d., and for third class 6s. 6d. They now proposed by this Bill to raise those fares to 16s., 12s. 6d., and 10s. respectively. That seemed to him to be a retrograde policy which he recommended to the attention of the Board of Trade.

SIR W. EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said the point upon which he took exception to this Bill was of great and vital importance to a large industry conducted in some cases by large and important firms, but in which many small men were engaged and had capital invested. He referred to Clause 16 of the Bill which provided that the company might—

> "Provide, work, own and use in connection with any extension of their railway system or otherwise in any district to which their said system affords access, omnibuses, coaches, cars and other road vehicles to be drawn or moved by animal, electric or any mechanical power and may therein convey persons, luggage, parcels and goods whether to or from their stations or otherwise, and to make and recover charges in respect of such conveyance and may enter into agreements with any company or persons for the supply or working of such omnibuses, coaches, cars and other road vehicles and may apply their corporate funds to the purposes aforesaid or any of them."

If that clause were allowed to stand the business of carting would be most seriously affected. The House would readily understand that a large railway company like the London and Brighton were not dependent on the profit they made out of carting solely. It was only, so to speak, a by-product of their business, and therefore they would be able to make rates and undercut the people engaged in this trade in such a way as seriously to affect or even destroy this most important industry. His primary objection therefore to the Bill was that a railway company should not have power to carry on the business of common carriers outside their ordinary business. Of course they had to have waggons and so forth for the purpose of conveying goods in certain directions to and from their stations, but he contended that if these powers were granted to them they might at once become competitors in the carrying trade which it was never intended they should. But there was a broader principle involved. He thought that in the interests of the community generally a railway ought not to be granted statutory rights and powers to engage in competition with carmen or any other branch of trade other than that incidental to railway traffic. They should be restricted to such trade as concerned their business as a railway company, and therefore in defence of these private interests he had spoken. The points he had brought before the House were of considerable importance and it was with the object of getting the sense of the House upon them that he moved the Motion standing in his name.

MR. GODFREY BARING (Isle of Wight) formally seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir William Evans-Gordon.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport) said that in answer to the hon. Member for Kidderminster he might say that what the Company proposed to do was to draw a supply of water from a well near Carshalton and bring it to London. That, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, was an enlargement of the powers of railway companies. He had conveyed to the Company the opinion of the Board of Trade, which was, that that was rather beyond the powers for which a railway company should press—that, in fact, they would constitute themselves a quasi-water company, and that he did not think the House would view such a thing with great favour. The railway company gave assurances that they had no intention of doing anything of the kind, or rather if they had any such intention they abandoned it, and that all they wished to do was to supply water to the immediate vicinity. He then pointed out that it would be desirable for them to give an undertaking, and they agreed to restrict the supply to an area of six miles from the point at which the well was sunk. With regard to the observations of the hon. Member for Stockport he saw some possible danger in the proposals of the Company to establish a guarantee fund among the employés, but the Company had agreed to meet the hon. Member by accepting a clause upstairs which would still his apprehensions. The question of boat fares was also a question to be dealt with in Committee. The Company were quite prepared to accept a modification with regard to third class fares, and the hon. Member had had an assurance on that point. The hon. Member had raised another point—a point to which the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney also referred. That was a matter the Bill did deal with. It was the question of the power of the Company to provide omnibuses, etc. The hon. and gallant Member for Stepney objected to the Company's enlarging their powers so as to become general carriers. The clause, as framed in the Bill, went rather a long way, but he had succeeded in inducing the London Brighton and South Coast Company to modify that clause, with a result that they were now no longer asking for enlarged powers. He hoped that assurance would satisfy the hon. and gallant Member for Stepney also. He might say, generally, that the Company had shown every willingness to meet all the criticisms brought to bear upon this Bill. Before he sat down he might say one word with regard to the growing tendency of raising objections to private Bills on Second Reading, on points which were essentially Committee points. Some of the points broughtf forward to-day were points which ought to have been brought forward in Committee. The point, however, brought forward by the hon. Member for Kidderminster was not of that kind, but a point of principle, and therefore it was that the Board of Trade felt it their duty to convey to the Company their views that it would not be wise for them to insist upon it. All the other points were points that might have been dealt with upstairs. He hoped, having made these observations, the Bill might now be allowed to pass its Second Reading.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) said his name appeared on the back of the Bill as the nominal proposer, and although he had no connection with the Company, he had been asked to put their case so far as necessary before the House. After what had been said by the Secretary to the Board of Trade, he need trouble the House very little. He would only say that the Company had done their best to meet the objections and had fully consulted every interest in accepting the proposals of the Board of Trade. He added his protest to that of the hon. Gentleman opposite against the practice which had grown up of opposing private Bills on Second Reading on points which had nothing to do with the contents of the Bill. In this particular case it was perfectly possible to have obtained an injunction against this Company if they had broken the law; but they had not, and their opponents knew it. In the next place, if the public were injured the proper course would have been to have brought in legislation to have dealt with the injury, and not to make a private company the victim of the want of legislation. He contended that a Second Reading of a private Bill ought not to be lightly stopped, because it often brought needless hardship on individuals. The Company was boring on its own grounds, and had a perfect right to deal with the water; The water was to be used to wash out the carriages. The public had often complained of the condition of some of the carriages of this railway company, and why should difficulties be put in the way of the railway company if they wanted to improve their rolling-stock for the convenience of the public?

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) congratulated the Secretary to the Board of Trade on having made some arrangement in regard to this particular Bill; but he hoped that the Bill would not be taken as a precedent. Very stringent conditions ought to be laid down in such Bills in regard to public companies taking water. There was no doubt that land had been permanently injured by public companies taking water from deep wells, and the private interests of farmers had suffered very severely therefrom.

* MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said he wished to protest against the attempt of the Secretary to the Board of Trade to prevent opposition to such Bills on Second Reading as this. The right hon. Gentleman must know that people interested in such Bills could not find the money to oppose a wealthy public company in Committee. The Board of Trade officials were paid to look after the interests of the public in an impartial way and not to act or to seem to act on behalf of any company whatever.

MR. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton) wished to ask, as a point of order, whether it was a rule, written or unwritten, or a point of honour, that no hon. Member who was a shareholder in the London and Brighton Railway should vote upon a Bill promoted by the company in which he had a financial interest.

* MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has put to me rather a difficult Question, and as it does not immediately arise on this Bill, I would rather defer the reply to it until the actual occasion arises. It is always open to the House to strike out the name of an hon. Member who happens to have voted in a division when that Member has been directly furthering his pecuniary interests by the vote which he has given. On each question, as it arises, it is for the House to decide.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

THE PORT OF LONDON.

* MR. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.) said that the subject to which he wished to draw the attention of the House was that of the port of London. The port was the source of the present prosperity and wealth of the capital of the Empire, and its condition should be made the concern of the Imperial Parliament in a very intimate way. No less than one-third of the value of the imports coming to this country passed through the port of London. It was no exaggeration to say that more than one half of the foreign and colonial or transhipment trade of the country was carried on in the port of London. If that port were done away with, no other port in the country could take its place, and the trade would be taken to a port belonging to some continental country. His Motion referred to the urgency of the need for consideration to be given by Parliament to this subject: but he did not intend to paint any lamentable picture of the condition of the trade of London. Fortunately, that trade was very large indeed, and it was increasing year by year. The port of London might be said to rank second to none in the world. It was situated in the midst of a teeming population, and the Thames Channel, from the sea to the City, was better and deeper

than the channels of Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, while the large rise and fall of the tide gave great facilities to the movement of craft up and down the river. That being so, the question might naturally arise as to why there should be any urgency in the matter. The fact was that Londoners had been too long dependent upon the kind provision which Providence had made for them. Our neighbours the Belgians, the Germans, and the Dutch had recognised the truth of the saying that "God helps those who help themselves." Although it was all very well to trust to Providence, even Providence required some assistance in the shape of labour and capital. The amount of labour and capital devoted to the improvement of the port of London was far less than had been given to many other ports in the world. That was due chiefly to neglect, of which there were three contributive causes. First of all, there was the present complicated system under which the duty of attending to the affairs of the port of London had been divided between several different authorities. In the second place, for a number of years the Thames Conservancy, which had the care of the port, did not show that amount of foresight which they ought; and in the third place, the dock system of the port had been in the hands of private companies which, from no fault of their own, could not provide the necessary capital to develop all the requirements of the port. He did not wish to criticise or animadvert on either of these authorities. Both the Thames Conservancy and the dock companies had had to run the gauntlet before the Royal Commission, and he had no doubt they had done their best during the past few years for the port. It was their misfortune that they had not sufficient powers to deal comprehensively with the great problem of the improvement of the port. In order that the House might understand the urgency of this question, he would give shortly an account of the proceedings which had led up to the present position of affairs. About the year 1890 the London County Council promoted a Bill of its own which contained certain provisions aiming at a stronger representation of the public on the Thames Conservancy Board. The result of that proposal was that four years later the Thames Conservancy promoted a Bill for the entire alteration of their constitution and for other purposes. During these intervening years considerable agitation had sprung up in regard to the condition of the port as it affected shippers, and especially the owners of large ships. In 1894 a Commission was appointed, consisting of three eminent gentlemen—Sir John Wolfe Barry, Admiral Sir George Nares, and Mr. Lyster—whose duty it was to report upon the necessity of deepening the channel of the lower reaches of the river, so as to enable the largest ships to come up to the port at low tide. That Commission reported in 1896 in favour of a thirty foot channel to Gravesend. No practical steps, however, were taken to carry out the recommendation of that Commission, and in 1900 application was made by the London County Council to the late Government to appoint a Royal Commission to consider the whole question of the Port of London. The Royal Commission was appointed, and was presided over by Lord Revelstoke. It sat for eighteen months and heard a large number of witnesses, and had the peculiar satisfaction of being able to report absolutely unanimously on all the points referred to them. Shortly stated, they recommended that a single public authority should be established to whom should be entrusted all the duties connected with the management and improvement of the port of London. They recommended, further, that very considerable sums of money should be expended in carrying out the improvement of the port and the docks, and that the dock companies' undertakings should be purchased by that public authority. Mr. Gerald Balfour, who was then President of the Board of Trade, prepared a Bill based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and introduced it into Parliament in 1903. In introducing the Bill, Mr. Gerald Balfour said—

> "It is absolutely essential that some means should be taken to bring the port of London up to modern requirements."

And, in winding up the debate on the Bill, Mr. Gerald Balfour used these words—

> "The debate has proved conclusively that the House of Commons is in favour of a new port authority for London."

The Bill was referred without opposition to a Joint Committee, presided over by Lord Cross. That Committee took evidence, and ultimately reported the Bill to the House, but it was then too late in the session for it to be possible to pass it that year. The unusual step was, however, taken of suspending the Bill, so that it might be proceeded with in in the following session. Unfortunately, during the interval those private and local interests, which had been the bane of London legislation for many years, were set in motion and succeeded in dissuading the late Government from their purpose. Mr. Gerald Balfour undoubtedly had at heart the interests of the port of London, and he felt certain that the ultimate abandonment of the Bill, without giving the House of Commons another opportunity of discussing it, was not due to Mr. Gerald Balfour. Seeing that the Bill had been dropped, and that there was no other course open to them, the London County Council promoted a Bill of their own. Mr. Bonar Law, who then represented the Board of Trade in the House, opposed the Bill on the ground that it was not a proper subject for private Bill legislation; and accordingly the Bill was thrown out. At the same time a Bill was promoted by the Thames Conservancy which proposed to give that Board very great powers for the improvement of the port, but this Bill was only allowed to proceed in an emasculated form, and merely gave power to borrow £200,000 for the dredging of the channel. In the meantime public opinion had been chafing at this delay. and some of the leading London newspapers took up the question. On October 7th, 1905, an article appeared in the *Standard* in which, referring to the tendency for Antwerp and Rotterdam to take the transhipment trade from London, it was stated—

> "It is of vital importance to save the oceanic transport of goods consigned to Great Britain for our own historic port, that the control of the river, and all that appertains to its trade requires to be vested in a single supreme authority."

And in the financial supplement of *The Times* for February 19th, 1906, reference was made to the abortive Bills of recent sessions and the article went on to say—

> "The uncertain situation which has been created is paralysing all improvements in the port . . . It will take a long time to make up for the last six years delay."

Even Mr. Scott, Chairman of the London and India Docks Company seemed to be impressed with the necessity of something being done. Speaking quite recently at the annual meeting of that company he said—

> "I cannot believe that no attempt will be made to settle this question. If such a scheme for a port authority be brought forward . . . we ought to try and make such a scheme a business scheme . . . if we can do it we shall do something to remove from the port of London the uncertainty which has hung over it for some years past, and to hasten the construction of those docks the need for which we foresaw several years ago."

So that in all quarters there was general agreement that action ought to be taken without delay. Indeed he did not see how anyone could come to any other conclusion after the Report of the Royal Commission. Stated shortly, that Royal Commission made two main proposals. The first was the improvement of the docks, and the second the improvement of the channel. On the first point they found that notwithstanding the fact that statistics showed a constant growth in the trade of the port, they had ascertained that the increase in the volume of trade had been much greater in Southampton, Hamburg, and Antwerp. When they inquired into the reason for this, they found that the general opinion was that the port of London was a slow port and caused much inconvenience to shippers, owing to the fact that the docks were quite inadequate to the needs of modern commerce. They rested that conclusion on a considerable volume of evidence. Mr. J. W. Bennett, of the Home and Foreign Exchange, said—

> "For years we have brought over very large quantities of our goods into the port of London, and we should bring them still if we could get a quicker delivery, and more facilities. . . We pay a much higher rate of freight into Southampton so as to get quicker delivery than we should with the port of London."

The Royal Commission commenting on this branch of the evidence said—

> "We may refer to some figures put in by Mr. Pembroke as to the relative time and cost of discharging ships of the same class at London and in Liverpool. In one case which he quoted, the same ship came from Rangoon with the same kind of cargo, on one voyage to London, and on another to Liverpool. At Liverpool she discharged 500 more tons than at London in two days less time, and the expenses were £367 less . . . Sir Alfred Jones, who has experience of the ports of London,

> Liverpool, and Bristol, put in figures to support his statement that while London costs about the same as Liverpool and Avonmouth, the despatch is about five times as bad in the case of a large vessel in London."

It appeared, therefore, that there was general dissatisfaction with the management of the port of London on the part of all concerned, and the conclusion of the Royal Commission was as follows—

> "It has, in our opinion, been proved, that the port of London is in danger of losing part of its existing trade, and certainly part of the trade which might otherwise come to it, by reason of the river channels and docks being inadequate to meet the increased and increasing requirements of modern commerce."

It was obvious that it was in the interests of the entire nation that some action should be taken to improve the docks and the channel of the river. If the House would allow him he would read a few words from the Report in regard to this matter—

> "It will be observed that in the largest class of modern vessel, ships over 10,000 tons, German competition is very close; it seems to be possible also that the United States are about to attempt to increase their mercantile marine by a subsidising policy. These are amongst the signs which show how seriously the maritime superiority of this country is now being challenged. It is clear that any incapacity of the greatest British port, which takes about two-fifths of the trade of the United Kingdom, and does so much transhipment and re-export trade, to accommodate the largest modern steamers, may count in deciding the result of the contest."

The Commission further pointed out that the mercantile superiority of this country was being challenged by Germany and the United States; that large vessels would probably dominate the oversea trade of the future, and that for their accommodation in the Port of London, the improvement of the docks, and the deepening of the channel of the river were essential. They estimated that £7,000,000 must be spent on these works if the Port of London was to be restored to its proper position; and this would be in addition to the money required for the purchase of the dock companies. It was impossible to estimate at present what the price of these undertakings would be, especially as their financial future was by no means assured. The profits of the London and West India Docks were in 1903 £647,000, out of which the company paid a dividend on their ordinary stock of $3\frac{1}{6}$ per cent; in 1904, £646,000, the dividend was $3\frac{1}{8}$; and in 1905, £585,000, it was only $1\frac{3}{4}$. The Millwall Company paid no dividend on £1,100,000 of its stock. The Surrey Commercial Dock paid 6 per cent. up to 1899, and had paid 5 per cent since. The Stock Exchange value of these companies amounted to £20,000,000; but there was little doubt that if they could be purchased at a fair value the income of the new port authority would suffice to make good the cost. With regard to the sum of £4,500,000 required for improving the docks, the commission suggested that the port authority should have the power to levy a duty on imported goods. That proposal involved very important considerations, and he was inclined to the opinion that it would be unwise to place an additional duty on goods brought into London, and that as the improvement of the docks would reduce the delay and thereby lessen the charges upon shipping, it would be less objectionable to make the latter pay the additional duty. The question of deepening the channel was a more difficult one still, because the Royal Commission could not see any way in which the money could be raised for the carrying out of this great object except by charging it upon the ratepayer. They reported that it would cost about £2,500,000, and made the suggestion that the money should be raised by the County and City Councils and charged upon the rates of London. The maximum of charge involved would be a three farthing rate all over London. If this scheme was carried out the management should be placed in the hands of a public body, and the Royal Commission recommended the creation of such a body. In doing that they only advocated the course which had been taken all over the world. There were very few examples where harbours and docks were in the hands of private companies, and the result was that London had now to compete with ports that were largely subsidised by State money. For instance, in recent years immense sums had been expended on improving the ports of Hamburg and Antwerp. During the last fifteen years £2,500,000 had been spent on the Port of London, but in the same period £15,000,000 had been spent at Hamburg on enlargement and on new docks. In Antwerp they were making the quays three times as large at a cost of £7,500,000. The result was, that in six years the tonnage of Hamburg had increased 31 per cent. while London had only increased 14 per cent. and Antwerp had increased at double the rate of London. It was the same with Liverpool. In fifteen years £8,500,000 had been spent, and in the last six years the Liverpool tonnage had increased by 29 per cent. It was clear that for harbours the expenditure must be in advance of requirements, and for this reason the money must be found by the State or by the municipality. In regard to Antwerp, the Belgian State Government had contributed a considerable amount of money, and the German Empire had contributed towards the construction of the Port of Hamburg. A deputation sent recently by the Thames Conservancy to examine continental ports had come back convinced of the necessity of adapting the Port of London to the requirements of modern ocean-going ships. In order to maintain the port, therefore, considerable expenditure would have to be incurred, and if the municipal authorities offered to provide or guarantee the money, they would be entitled to have sufficient representation on the governing body to protect the ratepayers from unlimited demands. On the other hand, the interests of the port required that there should be a large representation of the trading community on the governing body. Although the question of the constitution of the new authority was one of difficulty, he believed it would not be impossible to arrive at a compromise as between the various parties interested. All that was required was that the matter should be taken up by His Majesty's Government at an early date; and so great was the desire in London to obtain a satisfactory solution of this problem that the Government would not find insuperable difficulties in the way of reconciling conflicting interests. He concluded by moving the Resolution.

*MR. W. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that so far as the terms of the Motion were concerned, he thought that both sides of the House were in general agreement. A Bill had indeed passed the House which embodied the general principle. The demand that something should be done for the Port of London was based, not on any positive decline in the trade which came to the port, but on the belief, which was supported by the figures of the last ten years, that the Port of London was not maintaining the leading and supreme position which it had enjoyed in the past. We wanted to maintain our unique position. Taking the figures of England and Wales he found that in 1894 London was handling 34·6 per cent. of the imports; 19·3 of the home exports and 59·8 per cent. of the re-exports which maintained our position as the *entrepot* of the world. After ten years, in 1904, London handled 31·7 of the imports, 19·2 per cent. of the home exports and 52·9 per cent. of the re-exports. If he took the increase of shipping entered between 1890 and 1903 it showed that London had increased 30 per cent.; Antwerp, 101; Hamburg, 76; Marseilles, 55 and Rotterdam, 138. The tonnage of foreign shipping entered at Liverpool in 1901 was 6,000,000 and in 1904 7,980,000, an increase of 1,980,000. In London the figure in 1900 was 9,580,000 and in 1904 10,780,000, or only an increase of 1,200,000. The interest of Labour in the question of the improvement of the port was very great. It included all those engaged in the carrying trade and there were 60,000 carmen and 37,000 railway workers, there were also the bargemen and the lighterman numbering 5,600 and 19,710 dock and wharf labourers. The manufacturers were also interested as they wanted cheap raw material quickly. The decline in the average number of dock and wharf labourers was a very serious matter. In 1900 they numbered 15,530, in 1901, 16,454 while in 1905 they only numbered 12,507. These figures explained to some extent the unemployment which now existed and showed how serious the present state of things was for workmen. If it were solved it would go some way to settle the vexed question of unemployment in London. There were two causes which had brought about the present situation, the first was that the river was not deep enough and the second that the docks were not adequate. Looking to the fact that the size of the ships was continually increasing it was essential that a proper depth of water should be maintained. Mr., now Sir, Alfred L. Jones who was the senior partner in the firm of Elder Dempster and Co., President of the Incorporated

Chamber of Commerce at Liverpool, and Chairman of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association had said—

> "If London is restricted in the depth and size of her ships and Hamburg and Rotterdam, those two ports in particular which are going ahead tremendously, are able to get facilities which we cannot get it is a tremendous drawback to the British shipowners and British commerce altogether. I might go further, because you may look with certainty to the future producing very much larger ships. The economical ship is the large ship, and unless you can provide for the large ship you cannot compete for the carrying trade."

So far as dock accommodation was concerned, the Royal Commission found that it was inadequate in quays and berths, and that a new dock was required. The Report of the Royal Commission was also very emphatic as to the necessity for the establishment of a public authority, and he believed hon. Members on both sides of the House were of the same opinion. The dock companies themselves admitted that they were unable to do anything unless their financial powers were considerably extended, and what they wanted to do, as he understood, was to levy new dues. It was said that it would allow them to tax their rivals in trade, namely, the wharfingers, in order to restore a lost position. Inasmuch as the Royal Commission did not favour extended powers for the Thames Conservancy, both the existing authorities were ruled out of court.

As regarded the inevitable public authority, he did not desire to adumbrate the general lines on which it must be formed, but he did desire that the people of London should have an adequate representation upon it. He held no brief for the London County Council He did not happen to be a member of that body, although his hon. friend the Member for Devonport had some interest in it. But he put the claim on quite different grounds from that. He did not say that the people of London should be represented on the new authority, because they were going to raise £2,500,000 for dredging or guarantee the port stock; but he said the people of London should be fully represented because the Port of London was London's most valuable asset. It was the port which had made London what it was. It had been described as the main artery of London. He thought it could be more appropriately described as the heart of London. He hoped that one result of this debate would be to extract from the Government a pledge that they themselves would move in this important matter. They felt extremely proud of the energy, activity, and wealth of the citizens of London which had built up the greatest port in the world. They were very desirous that London should maintain this position, and they asked the Government to help them. In conclusion might he remind the House of the words of Cowper—

> "Where has commerce such a mart,
> So rich, so thronged, so drained, and so supplied,
> As London, opulent, enlarged, and
> Still increasing London?"

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the condition of the Port and docks of London urgently demands attention, with a view to the management thereof being forthwith placed in the hands of a public authority."

Mr. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said he had listened with very great interest to the speeches delivered in this debate, and he thought that whatever opinions might be held in any section of the House upon the merits of the Resolution which was now before them, there would, at any rate, be common agreement among all sections as to the great interest and importance of the question which it raised. It seemed to him as a London Member that the Port of London was indeed the greatest asset of the greatest city in the world, and he did not think it was too much to say that the prosperity of this country depended in a very large degree, and in the most direct manner, upon the proper and efficient administration of all the great seaports of this country, and in a particular degree upon the efficient administration of the Port of London. If it were the fact that the present administration of the Port of London was inadequate, inefficient, not proportioned to the needs of the times, and not likely to be able to cope with the developments of the future, then he was entirely at one in saying it was high time a change of some sort was made. The first question, however, was whether or not as a matter of fact the present administration of the Port of

London was so inadequate or so inefficient as to demand the sweeping change adumbrated by some hon. Gentlemen. In spite of all that had been said by hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side he was by no means satisfied, and he did not know that the House could be entirely satisfied, that the management of the Port of London had been so bad as had been suggested, or so bad as to warrant the tremendous changes that had been proposed. He was glad to hear hon. Members say that they did not raise any allegation that the trade of London was declining or that London could be regarded in any sense as a decadent or dying port. It was undoubted that the tonnage which came into London was increasing in a very remarkable degree, and not only was the tonnage increasing, but the value of the goods dealt with was increasing still more, and by every index that would enable one to judge of the prosperity of the port it was impossible to regard it as a decadent or dying port. What hon. Members said was that it was not progressing so fast as certain other ports which were amongst its most important rivals. He did not think that it was seriously possible to base a proposal of the magnitude of that suggested by the hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side upon such an argument as that. He did not deny that the rate of the progress of the trade of London was lower than that of the trade of Antwerp, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and many other ports of a like nature, and that was simply because London had started from a much higher figure than any one of those ports. Taking the year 1850, there entered the port of Antwerp in that year 350,000 tons of shipping, whilst in the same year 5,000,000 tons entered the Port of London. If London had increased her trade in the same proportion as Antwerp had, then in the year 1904, instead of having 17,000,000 of tons entering the Port of London, there would have been 134,000,000 tons of shipping, which was very nearly equal to the whole of the shipping entering the great ports of the world in one year. It was hardly possible therefore for hon. Members seriously to found a complaint as to the administration of the Port of London upon an argument which was so essentially fallacious actuarily. Before the London County Council started shipping on its own account in London the amount of tonnage, for instance, of the Old Swan Pier was practically nothing, but at a moderate computation there were now at least 1,000,000 tons per annum there, due entirely to the enterprise of the London County Council, or, in other words, the London County Council's shipping had increased by 1,000,000 per cent., while British shipping had increased by infinitely less. He did not think, however, that hon. Members would contend that the steamships of the London County Council were in a more flourishing condition than the whole of the British mercantile marine. He would appeal to the Report of the Royal Commission to show that the trade was not so bad as was made out by some hon. Members. Reporting on June 16th, 1902, the Commissioners, after a most exhaustive review of the whole circumstances, said—

> "We are unable to conclude, therefore, that the figures show any relative decline compared with the other ports named."

They went on to give reasons for that view, and they said that Southampton, Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp had all gained largely in shipping returns in recent years by the establishment of lines of steamers, many of them with subsidies, just as London and other ports gained at an earlier date, but that there was nothing to indicate that the older ports were being superseded or prevented from largely increasing. The mere assertion, which was true, that London was not increasing so fast as other ports, therefore, in the face of that argument itself, and of the considered conclusion of the Royal Commission, was not sufficient to determine this House to accede to a very fundamental change in the administration of the port. It was said that the river was not up-to-date, that the channel was not deep enough, and that the port generally ought to be made available for large ocean-going steamers. Really one would think that London was unavailable for large ocean-going steamers, and that the depth of the channel compared unfavourably with that of the channels of ports in foreign countries. As a matter of fact the channel into the Port of London was not only one of the best, but, he believed, the very best into any port in the world. Its minimum depth at low water right up to Tilbury

Dock was 24 feet, and in 1908 it would be 30 feet, as it was being dredged 6 feet. There was a range of tide of from 18 to 20 feet in the channel, so that what was now 43 feet at high water would be 49 feet two years hence. In other words, there would be a depth at the very worst of 24 feet, which in a few hours, by the operation of the tide, became the tremendous depth of 43 feet. It was said that it must be made available for large ocean-going steamers. He found some difficulty in understanding how hon. Members could suggest that there was a want of capacity for that purpose at the present time. The largest cargo vessels fully laden could not reach the great competing ports which had been referred to—Hamburg, Antwerp, Rotterdam—but the biggest cargo vessel that floated on the seas could go easily, on the turn of the tide, right up to Tilbury Dock, and be dealt with with the greatest ease. The kind of cargo vessel to which they must look forward was such a steamer as the "Celtic," which was 680 feet long, 75 feet beam, and drew 31 feet of water. At Southampton that vessel lay upon the mud, which, as the House knew, was a serious thing for a ship of that size, and in the mind of any owner of a big ship was a reproach to the port. At Antwerp it was utterly impossible to receive a ship of that kind in any of the docks, and if she lay outside, as she was bound to do, she was on the mud at low water. At Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Bremen, four of the largest ports in Europe, a ship such as the "Celtic" could not go near; it was utterly impossible to do so if the vessel were fully laden. At Bristol a ship of the size of the "Celtic" could not enter because the widest dock entrance was only 70 feet. At Liverpool, to which as a matter of fact this ship traded, she was only recently able to get into dock at all when the spring tides were very favourable, and at other times she had been forced to discharge in the middle of the Mersey. So that, taking all the ports mentioned in competition with London, the largest cargo boat found serious and real objection to each one. But in the Port of London a boat of the kind could go into Tilbury Dock without even waiting for high water, and could go straight up to the dock at any state of the tide and do her work without being placed in any unseamanlike position. He did not know that there was any better way of judging between any two docks in respect of the service they respectively rendered to steamers than by ascertaining what was the length of quay. Judged by that standard London provided a total of forty-four miles of quay space, Hamburg had not quite half that accommodation, and Antwerp had but eleven miles, much of which was not available for ocean-going ships. Taking the total length of quay space and the amount of tonnage entering the port, London had more liberal accommodation than any other port in the world, in spite of the fact that it had to deal with more tonnage than any other port in the world. Whether they applied the test of quay space, of the depth of the water, of width of dock entrance, or of the provision of adequate graving docks, cranes and other discharging appliances, he said, without fear of contradiction, that London had nothing whatever to fear from a comparison with any port in the world, and it was really not the case that the docks of London were not thoroughly up-to-date for all practical purposes. Undoubtedly there was some truth in the allegation that London was a slow port, but that had nothing to do with good or bad administration. It was due to the fact that there was in London what there was not in most of the other ports of the world, namely, a custom founded on general convenience whereby the charges for dealing with cargoes upon the dock side fell, not upon the consignee, but upon the shipowner, and he had to consider whether it was worth his while to run to the expense of unloading his cargo on the dock side and having it sorted there, or follow the practice of discharging by the slower, but very much cheaper method of lighters or barges. The first was the quicker, the latter the cheaper method, and it was a matter of arrangement between shipowner and merchant which the port authority could not control. He thought he had said enough to show that with all its faults the management and administration of the Port of London was on the whole as good as, and in many respects greatly better than the administration of any other port. The proposed change, therefore, was unnecessary, and certainly if it were necessary it should not be in the direction adumbrated by hon. Members on the Ministerial side. The Resolution said that there should be a public authority. He did not think there could be any real objection to that, but the Resolution was like an official answer—it all depended upon the interpretation; and he confessed that he did not believe that the hon. Member who moved this Resolution did so entirely without reference to the proposal that had been made for the quick or slow municipalising of the control of the Port of London. All he could say was that that was a change which he was firmly convinced would be very injurious to the Port of London. There were only three ports in this country which were managed by the municipal authorities, and each one of them was badly managed and a failure. There was the Port of Bristol, and that city had endured for many years a 6d. rate in respect of its port. That rate he understood was shortly to be increased to 1s. Then there was Preston which had endured a 2s. rate for a very long time; and finally there was Manchester, the story of whose dealings with the port was well known. The example of Manchester was not such as to encourage ratepayers to increase their confidence in the municipal management, of ports. He asked the House to consider, if those ports were badly managed and had suffered by municipal management, how enormously greater and more serious to the whole community were the dangers which would be involved if the gigantic interests of the Port of London were turned over to municipal control. The mere docks of London ran all the way to Tilbury, and the authority which controlled the docks must control the river as well. He would point out that the river as a port ran all the way to Southend, and that was miles outside the area which it was ever suggested should be under the jurisdiction of the London County Council. Even the present dock area was enormously outside the jurisdiction of the County Council, but he was afraid that what this Resolution meant was County Council control of the Port of London. Surely the activity of that body was already great enough. They dealt with the roads of this tremendous collection of cities called London. ["No, no."] They dealt with education, they dealt with lunacy, they dealt with health, they dealt with the administration of building acts, they dealt with the extinction of fire, and they had to deal with the difficulties inherent in trying to recommend to the notice of the ratepayers in running a line of steamboats that were running at great loss. They ran trams, they controlled main drainage, they regulated weights and measures, while their representatives also had a very large interest in the water supply and in the housing of the people. They wanted also to supply the greater part of the bulk electricity provided for the industries of the city, and in addition to that he was afraid they now wanted to get the absolute control of the Port of London. Hon. Members opposite had referred to the Royal Commission. If there was one thing on which that Royal Commission was absolutely definite and strong, it was in the clear recommendation that what ever happened, however the new port authority might be constituted, the London County Council should not have the controlling and dominatnig interest in it. From the beginning it must be said the London County Council had been equally strong in seeking to secure that control. In the recent Bill to which an hon. Member had referred they desired not the nine members out of the forty suggested, but twenty-four out of the forty members. What was far more important, they desired, as they always would desire in everything they put their hands upon—indeed they claimed—the absolute financial control of the port. He reminded the House that anybody who had financial control had the whole control. What was meant by the financial control of the Port of London? At this moment the dock companies alone paid every year £1,000,000 in weekly wages, and of that £1,000,000 the London County Council would have absolute control. But there was other work than that of the dock companies. There was the work done by shipowners and others, which amounted at a moderate computation to another £1,000,000. Thus there was £2,000,000 paid every year in weekly wages in the docks alone, and they formed only half of the whole port. There was at least another £2,000,000 paid along the wharves on the quays of the river altogether apart from the docks. If the House came to the conclusion that it desired to give the control of the Port of London to the London County Council, it should clearly understand that it was giving to that body the control of at least £4,000,000 a year in weekly wages, and of 60,000 or 70,000 men, every one of whom had a vote. He asked with some confidence whether it was right, whether it was reasonable, that a public body, a body of gentlemen, however respectable, however sound, who relied for their position on popular election should have under their control the wages of 60,000 or 70,000 men, amounting to such a gigantic sum as he had named. He thought there could be only one answer to such a question. Neither the Mover nor the Seconder of the Resolution had suggested any solution for the difficulties which they alleged to exist. He believed that nothing could really be shown to be seriously wrong with the Port of London, but if there was anything wrong he was certain it would not be put right but would be made infinitely worse by turning the control over to the London County Council. If the thing was wrong, in his belief the solution was to be found by forming in London and giving the control of the Port of London to a trust based on the system followed in port after port of the United Kingdom with conspicuous success. He might refer to Glasgow, to Swansea, to the Port of Leith, to the Tyne, but above all to the Port of Liverpool, which was the most striking instance of the success of the system. At Liverpool the port authority was an authority consisting of twenty-eight persons. Of that number twenty-four were elected by the people who paid the dues, that was to say by the shipowners and by the merchants, and the remaining four were nominated by the Mersey Conservancy Board. The effect of that was that practically year in and year out the harbour of Liverpool was admirably administered, that the authority was able to raise money cheaply and well, and above all that the expenses of running the port were kept down consistently with efficiency. That was due to the fact that they had in Liverpool absolutely the only check which in his opinion would ever be effective against extravagance, namely, that the men who had the spending of the money were themselves the men who had to find the money and not men who could foist the expenditure off on the ratepayers of a large community. That was an admirable business arrangement, and he saw no reason why such an arrangement should not be made in respect of the Port of London. He had no doubt that if the dock companies and other authorities concerned were approached in this matter they would be perfectly ready to co-operate in the formation of such an authority. There was no objection to a public authority, but there was serious objection to a municipal authority. While he believed the Port of London at this moment was in a very admirable state indeed, he did not think it was likely to remain in its present excellent and up-to-date position if the intolerable uncertainty which had hung over it for the last five or six years was allowed to continue. It was a most miserable state of things when the dock companies themselves, who were all men having great interests connected with the river generally, did not know from one day to another almost what was going to become of them, and whether it was worth their while to spend money on such improvements as became necessary in the best ports from time to time. It was that that was the matter with the Port of London, added to the crushing and terrible burdens which the municipal authorities had already put on the rates. Nothing but private enterprise, nothing but the best possible management, nothing but that courage and endurance which he believed had been conspicuously shown at all times by the port authorities of London during the long period which they had gone through, could have maintained the Port of London without bringing it into infinitely greater disrepute than there was any sign of at the present moment. He hoped that after consideration of this matter a proper solution might be found, but he did not believe it would be on the lines broadly suggested by the Resolution before the House. On the contrary he believed that would inflict on London what he believed to be the greatest danger which now menaced it, namely, the imposition on the greatest asset of the greatest city of the United Kingdom the injustice of municipal control.

*MR. BARNARD remarked that the last speaker ended in a general attack on the London County Council, but he had altogether failed to acquaint himself with the facts on which he asserted that the London County Council sought to control the Port of London. He had referred to the Bill of the London County Council. The last public assertion of that body before any public tribunal was the evidence of the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow before the Committee on the Government Bill, and that evidence held good to-day. He there, speaking for the London County Council, claimed only a representation of fifteen members out of a board of forty. He (Mr. Barnard) thought the House would agree that that was a very moderate demand. Might he in a word follow a remark which the last speaker had made? The hon. Member had said that the Council had too much work to do, and referred to their work in maintaining education. Everyone knew that the work of education was imposed on the Council by the late Government against the wishes of the Council, and everyone also knew if the question of money was to be brought into the transaction that the order which was sent to the London County Council to carry out the work of education did not have in the same envelope the Post Office Order necessary to meet the expenditure entailed by the work. He was bound to say for his part that he was sick and tired of hearing of the London County Council from the Opposition benches when any matter of a remedial character dealing with this great city was under discussion. They had heard to-night two good speeches, one from a member of the London County Council and another from a gentleman nearly connected with it. He was pleased to hear the speech of the Member for St. George's, but there was one remark of a practical character which he hoped the House would permit him to make. The hon. Member gave a number of statistics. He compared Liverpool with London, and said that the percentage of Liverpool trade increase was so much more than that of London. All who read the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would remember that if they started from the highest degree and went into percentages they might get into a very mixed comparison from a business point of view. He welcomed most heartily the speech of the Member for St. Pancras, who put the matter in the right key and approached it in a perfectly business-like attitude. He had insisted most fully that the position of the Port of London at the present moment was undoubtedly one that required great consideration, and the only question was in what way they were going to deal with it. The hon. Member for St. Pancras had mentioned the position of the London County Council regarding the guaranteeing of the money payment. That was where he (Mr. Barnard) ventured to join issue with him. From his point of view he did not believe there was any necessity whatever that the Port of London should be in any way subsidised from the rates. He thought it was well able to bear its burden from either ships or dues. What did the people who talked about the Port of London complain of? He happened to have been on the governing body of the Port of London for some time, and if they would allow him he would read out the figures. In 1858, the first full year after the Conservancy was formed, the trade in the port was something under 9,000,000 tons. In 1868 it had risen to 10,000,000 tons, in 1878 to 13,000,000 tons, in 1888 it had gone up to 20,000,000 tons, in 1898 to 22,000,000 tons, and last year, 1905, it reached the enormous figure of 25,867,000 tons. If he contrasted the difference between the various ports of the United Kingdom, taking the period 1894 to 1904, he saw that during that time London had increased in its tonnage by 24 per cent., Newcastle had increased by 16 per cent., Glasgow had increased by 30 per cent. the municipal Port of Bristol had increased by 19 per cent., whereas Liverpool had gone up by 30 per cent. If he went over these points one by one he found in the total figures that London had always increased by a larger amount of tons than any other port. As regarded the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, he ventured to say that if London had had the same powers given to it in its Conservancy as was suggested by the Member for St. Pancras, and the capital sum that the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board had to deal with, it would have increased with the same rapidity that the Liverpool Docks had done. He would not dwell on the question of the Port of Bristol; he knew that it was a municipal port, but he would remind the House that the hon. Member who had last spoken said that Bristol was charged 6d. in the £ for its port. He had in his hand, however, the evidence of the general manager of the Bristol Docks, given before the Royal Commission, and it was distinctly stated that 4d. was the maximum charge on the rates which they were entitled to make. He did not think any case had been made out to show that the Thames Conservancy, as responsible for the Port of London, had been in any way delinquent. With the funds at their disposal they had done everything in their power to bring the port up to as near a state of perfection as possible. The hon. Member for St. Pancras had mentioned that the Thames Conservancy brought in a Bill two years ago, and dropped most of the provisions of it: but that was because political exigencies made them do so. He would point out that they did not drop that part of the Bill which carried with it an expenditure of £400,000 for the dredging of the Thames. It was a funny thing that the London County Council did not appear on that occasion. Why did not they lodge a petition and indulge in some of that opposition on the Second Reading which the House had heard of to-night, if they thought the Thames Conservancy was not fit to govern the river? They did nothing of the sort, but allowed the Thames Conservancy to carry the Bill, and they were now engaged in prosecuting the work with that sum of money at their disposal. He ventured to think that the proper body for the future management of that great river was a public trust of some description. He personally expressed his opinion that it was highly undesirable; he believed it was unscientific to multiply different forms of local government. He could not help thinking that the Thames Conservancy formed the nucleus of a governing body. Parliament could, and ought to alter the constitution of that body. Everyone knew the constitution of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and they also knew about the Clyde and the Tyne. If this House could use its influence to bring about the establishment of a managing body for the Port of London in which the traders, as the men who required the conveniences and paid the money, had the dominating interest, he had no doubt that with all the natural advantages which London possessed the port would go still further ahead and exceed the pre-eminence it occupied at the present time. Those who had to do with the management of the river had done what they could to learn lessons from other places; they sent twelve of their members to Antwerp, and as the result of their investigations the report which they presented distinctly showed that the Port of London was not very far behind the times at the present moment. Undoubtedly it could be improved, and he believed it would be improved by an aimiable conference between the principal parties concerned. That was how the Thames Conservancy carried their Bill last year when they got permission to spend the £400,000 to which he had referred. He believed it only required the Board of Trade to give a lead to bring about some salutary and advantageous result on the lines largely indicated by the hon. Member for St. Pancras who, he was glad, had brought forward that Resolution.

*MR. RUSSELL REA (Gloucester) agreed that those who had had the management of the docks of London in the past had done the best they could with the resources at their command. There could be no doubt, however, in the minds of those who heard the speeches of the mover and seconder and who knew the facts that the progress of the Port of London was arrested, especially as regarded the construction of new works and new docks. The reason of this was that there was no authority which was able to tackle the problem. The dock companies had not the financial power to extend and develop the Port of London as it should be developed. They had come to this House again and again and had demanded those powers, and again and again they had been refused. The power to charge dues on goods entering the port was a necessary power to give to the port authority. It would provide an adequate revenue at very slight cost to the users of the port.

Supposing the port authority were allowed to levy dues on the imports to London on the same scale as they were charged by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board at Liverpool a revenue would be provided of £900,000 a year. That revenue would be very much greater than would be required by the port authority in addition to the rates now charged on shipping. They had no power—and Parliament would never concede to any private body the power—to charge dues on the goods entering and leaving the Port of London. But such a power was necessary to an efficient port authority; and for the Port of London, therefore, there must be a public trust, either national and independent, or municipal. The Bill of the late Government, which was a good Bill, proposed an independent trust with a municipal element in it, and it gave the right to levy dues on goods. The late Government weakly allowed that Bill to be wrecked on account of municipal jealousy on small and insignificant points. That Bill did give the right to levy dues on goods. The Bill having been allowed to expire, the County Council brought in theirs last year. It was frankly a municipal Bill. The Council gave themselves a membership of twenty-four out of the forty of which the port authority was to be constituted. The new authority was practically to be a committee of the London County Council, designed to rule the Port of London. But then they did not venture to ask this House for the power of levying rates on goods, because they knew that it was extremely improbable that Parliament would grant it. Their scheme was therefore financially unsound, and it would have cast a fresh burden on the ratepayers. He believed that any municipal element was entirely unnecessary; and as a London ratepayer he protested against the idea of any guarantees being given by the County Council to an authority that would be as wealthy as itself. There were as strong objections to municipal control as there were to private control. Municipal control would mean the grant to a municipality of the right to tax the nation on a fourth of the imports that entered the country. Though a friend of municipal enterprise, he submitted that for the municipality to control the Port of London would not be a democratic measure at all; on the contrary, it would be a reactionary and anti-democratic measure. In Liverpool the docks fifty years ago were under the municipality, and they were taken from the municipality by Parliament, very greatly to the advantage of the port. The true democratic principle was that the control should be in the hands of those who found the money. What London wanted was first of all a port trust; next, that this trust should be endowed with adequate power, financial and otherwise, principally the power to levy a very insignificant rate on goods; and, lastly, that those who contributed the whole of the revenue should constitute that port authority. But the authority must be an independent and national authority, and not a municipal or even a semi-municipal authority.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said they had had a most useful debate in which many interesting speeches had been made. He could not pretend that the Government were now in a position to make any pronouncement on the subject, but when the matter was gone into it would be done with the care which its great importance undoubtedly demanded. The question was exceedingly important, not merely to London, but to the whole of the country. If a step had to be taken it should be taken with great care and caution. He had read the evidence and the Report of the Royal Commission, and he thought that the case of the County Council had been put very moderately in the present debate. He did not think the very moderate and statesmanlike speech of the hon. Member for St. Pancras justified the criticism passed upon it by the hon. Member for Norwood. The hon. Member did not claim that the control of the Port of London should be handed over entirely to the London County Council. What was the problem before them? There were a good many things on which they were all in actual agreement so far as he could see. There was undoubted dissatisfaction with the present arrangements of the port, in spite of the able defence made by the hon. Member for Norwood. It was not so much an attack upon the management of the Port of London as upon the inadequacy of the present system. He dared say that the port authorities had done their best with the resources at their command. He had no doubt that the Thames Conservancy had its failings, but there was undoubtedly, for one reason or another, considerable dissatisfaction with the management and administration of the port of London on the part of those who used it. On this subject the Royal Commission in their Report stated that there was dissatisfaction with the Port of London on the part of all concerned with it, whether shipowners or merchants. He did not think that was due to mere grumbling. There was some sort of justification on the part of those who used the port for the opinion they had expressed. There was another thing upon which there was absolute agreement, and that was as to the urgency of the problem. For one reason or another all Parties in the House agreed that something should be done quickly in the matter. There was some evidence to show that owing to the uncertainty created by the Royal Commission, by Bills brought before the House of Commons, by one scheme after another to alter the authority, the present authority could not embark upon schemes, even within their resources, for improving the present conditions. It was desirable that this uncertainty should be brought to an end, and as soon as possible. But there were other reasons why the problem was an urgent one. The Commission came to a perfectly unanimous decision. They said—

> "It has in our opinion been proved that the Port of London is in danger of losing part of its existing trade, and certainly part of the trade which might otherwise come to it by reason of the river channels and docks being inadequate to meet the increased requirements of modern commerce."

That was a very serious conclusion to come to by a very impartial Commission, and one which no Government could pass over without going very carefully into the matter.

*MR. MORTON: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that the deepening of the Channel below Gravesend is now being attended to, and that above Gravesend it is nearly complete.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, but on a very small scale. It was clear that a very considerable sum would have to be expended in deepening the channel of the river. There was agreement also that a considerable sum would have to be spent, not merely upon dredging and deepening the channel of the river, but upon dock extension. Practically there had been no dock extension for over twenty years, while there had been an increase of over £10,000,000 in the business of the port since the last dock extension. How was the necessary capital to be raised? It was clear that the present dock companies could not raise the capital for the purpose, and, that being so, some other authority must be set up for the purpose in order to carry out these very urgent and necessary reforms. And the third point on which there was general agreement was that there must be one authority, and that that authority must be a public one. There was no country in Europe, as had been said, that handed over the control of its great docks to private authorities, and he thought the time had come when there ought to be one great public authority for controlling the greatest harbour in the world. The other point was what that authority was going to be. He did not understand that the London County Council put forward a claim to having the controlling voice. On that he expressed no opinion. Then as to the terms of purchase, that was a matter that would have to be gone into very carefully later on. It had been suggested that there should be an amiable conference, and there appeared to be a disposition to have such a friendly conference. There would be nothing done this year, for the reason that the notices had to be given in November. He thought the suggestion should be acted upon, and that a conference should be summoned by the Board of Trade. In his opinion a useful purpose had been served by the discussion, which had shown a general agreement, and he thought there was every prospect of a satisfactory conclusion being arrived at.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House is of opinion that the conditions of the Port and docks of London urgently demands attention, with a view to the management thereof being forthwith placed in the hands of a public authority."

CORONERS' BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill said the object of it was to provide that it should not be necessary hereafter for either the coroner or the jury to view a body unless the coroner or a majority of the jury should deem a view necessary. That was a reform in Coroner's Court law which had long been required by the country. He thought it was the general opinion that the Bill should be passed this session.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Debate arising,

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) said this might be a very good Bill, but the hon. Member, in moving it, had given no reason for passing it. In the absence of any reason why it should be passed he was bound to oppose such a proposal. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) seconded the Motion for adjourning the debate.

Motion made and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Lord Robert Cecil*)—put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said that he opposed this Bill. It was very evident that if an inquest was necessary at all somebody must view the body.

And it being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. PAUL (Northampton) said he was sorry to detain the House, especially after what had occurred that morning, but he had no choice, since he wished to call attention to the question of the appointment of Mr. Milvain as Judge Advocate-General. That question had assumed a more serious aspect than it appeared to possess when it was first raised before the House. It involved the grave constitutional point of the right of the Executive Government by administrative decree to create a new permanent, salaried office without the sanction of this House. His right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War had referred him to the report of the Esher Committee. There was no one for whom he had a greater admiration than Lord Esher, whom he had known for forty years; but Lord Esher was not King, Lords, and Commons, and he could not alter the constitution of the country. If Parliament chose to act on the report of the Esher Committee good and well; but the Report of the Committee could not give the Executive Government any power which it did not possess before. He had put a question to his right hon. friend the Secretary for War, which, by the way, was severely edited at the table, he understood with the sanction of Mr. Speaker. The question he asked was what was the legal authority for the appointment of Mr. Milvain as Judge Advocate-General. The answer was that Mr. Milvain had been appointed Judge Advocate-General, who was empowered to give advice on all legal questions referred to him, by the Secretary for War, and that Mr. Milvain could be dismissed at any time. He might be told that the responsibility for this appointment did not rest with the present Secretary of State for War, but with the right hon. Member for Croydon. He altogether declined to accept that statement. So long as the right hon. Gentleman remained in office he was responsible to this House and the country. If this appointment was, as he maintained, a most nefarious job, his right hon.

friend, if he supported it, would make himself *particeps criminis*. On the last occasion when he drew attention to this subject the hon. Member for Sheffield, with a transient lapse of courtesy, said that he was an ignoramus. He dared say that his legal knowledge corresponded with the ignorance of the hon. Gentleman, but if the hon. Gentleman argued that the Government had power to create a charge of this kind without Parliamentary sanction, then he pleaded guilty to ignorance, but it was an ignorance shared by the highest constitutional authorities, including the right hon. Baronet the Member for Oxford University. He had never spoken to Mr. Milvain; he had never seen him; Mr. Milvain was to him merely a name, and he wished only to raise the subject of Mr. Milvain's appointment as a grave constitutional question. He would like to remind his hon. friend behind him that if there was one question besides free trade which was discussed at the general election it was the desire to restore to this House that reputation which the public considered, rightly or wrongly, had been greatly impaired during the last few years. The noble Lord the Member for Horsham had said the previous morning that there were a good many Members on his side of the House who were not responsible for the act of the late Government. He admitted that the appointment of Mr. Milvain was made last year after the House rose, but he remembered reading an article in *The Times* written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds arguing against that appointment on constitutional grounds. Until recently the office of Judge-Advocate-General had always been held by a Member of this House and responsible to it. The Judge-Advocate-General was the legal security of the private soldier, and should be responsible to this House alone. It was quite true that in 1872 the Secretary of State for War and Mr. Gladstone, eager for economy, induced a Judge to undertake this duty, but he thought on constitutional grounds the appointment of Sir Francis Jeune should have been challenged. The only reason that it was not challenged was that the country was £2,000 a year richer. But the English Judge, unlike the Scottish or Irish Judge, was a busy man, and all these cases were examined into not by Sir F. Jeune but by Mr. O'Dowd. Then last year this arrangement was come to under which Mr. Milvain was appointed. He contended that when Mr. Milvain was appointed under that arrangement he became a member of the Government, and when the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the City resigned he ought to have resigned. As to the importance of this office, Sir George Osborne Morgan, who held it for some time, said that he had reversed 600 decisions of courts martial in four years, in favour of the soldier. Ought not the gentleman who held so important an office to be responsible to this House? Was it a great hardship that he should be called upon to resign with his Government? Mr. Mellor, in order to take the post of Judge-Advocate-General, gave up his practice at the Bar, and the Government which he joined lasted only six months, and Mr. Mellor ceased to be Judge Advocate-General without a penny of compensation from public funds, and he was sure he would have scorned to have received any. Sir William Harcourt when he became a Member of the House gave up his practice at the Parliamentary Bar. People made sacrifices in this way every day and did not come upon the public for a pension. He had nothing to do with the patronage of the Lord Chancellor, but if the noble Lord decreed that Mr. Milvain should preside over a county court that might be a happy solution of an embarrassing problem. He had taken up this question upon public grounds. He moved the rejection of the Bill.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) seconded the Motion for the rejection. When the right hon. Gentleman became the Secretary of State for War he did so he said as the representative of the House and the country. He did not become a trustee to carry out the plans of another Government. He need not perpetuate an act, which he would do the present Secretary of State for War the justice to say he would rather have cut off his hand than have sanctioned. The change of Government meant nothing if they merely changed the dial of the clock, while the works behind the dial went on. He protested against the appointment of Sir Francis Jeune on public grounds, and he protested against the appointment of Mr. Milvain. He had always been on friendly terms with Mr. Milvain, however, and would not say a word to wound his feelings. The late Secretary of State for War had presumed to convert a political and temporary office into a permanent one, and he did something more. He had imposed an annual charge of £2,000 a year on the public funds for a gentleman who was going out of Parliament, and who deserved some recompense for having trudged through the lobbies so obediently. Mr. Milvain was to have a salary of £2,000 a year as Judge-Advocate-General, and was to retain the office until he reached the age of seventy, when he was to get a pension. That extraordinary appointment had come straight from the brain of the late Secretary of State for War, just as Minerva came from the brain of Jupiter. He should not object to Mr. Milvain's obtaining compensation, but that he should continue in that office was a gross public scandal. When the House remembered the hundreds of thousands of men who by this Bill were placed, and rightly and properly so, under exceptional legislation, they should be very chary of relieving Ministers from the responsibility of being answerable for the administration of the law, and of preventing the House from being able to criticise the administration of the law. From the time the Act was established until practically the present time there had always been in this House a Minister of justice and Attorney-General for the Army, who was directly responsible to Parliament. It was essential that that should be so, because he did not know with what conscience hon. Gentlemen could pass, as they did in this Bill, clause after clause in reference to the Army without having their hand on the safety valve which they could move in the event of any maladroit practice or any injustice taking place in the Army. That was the principle of the post of Judge-Advocate-General, and in that office there had been many eminent men. The powers of the office were enormous, and they were sketched by the late Lord St. Helier, who said that the Judge-Advocate-General was a court of appeal in every court-martial. Having regard to that, why should he not be a Member of the House? The right hon. Gentleman said that he was responsible, but any Member with six months experience of the House of Commons knew that the head of a department, however conscientious he might be, depended on officials. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had no moral right to appoint Mr. Milvain to this post when the late Government were going out of office. The House would forgive him if he spoke rather feelingly on this subject, for he knew of a gross miscarriage of justice because there was no responsible Minister in this House whom they could tackle. Three years ago, when Lord St. Helier was very ill, and the deputy Judge-Advocate-General, who was an extremely able and conscientious official, was also ill, the duties devolved upon a briefless barrister, a gentleman named Boase, at £1,000 a year. The ragging case at Cape Town arose, but the charge was so framed at the War Office in the Judge-Advocate-General's department that the officers had to be found not guilty, although the evidence was conclusive. He seconded the Motion of his hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Paul.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) said that if the Motion succeeded and this Bill were rejected the result would be that there would be no law for the Army at all. He passed from that, however, because he quite followed the reason for which his hon. friend had raised this question. This Motion offered the proper opportunity. He wished to point out that however bad the appointment in question, he was bound hand and foot in respect of it. He succeeded to a contract of the late Government who appointed Mr. Milvain to occupy the office of Judge-Advocate-General until he was seventy years of age, at a salary of £2,000 a year. They could dismiss him, but they would have to find the money out of public funds to compensate him. There was the contract, and he could not get out of it any more than Parliament could get out of the contract to pay the National Debt. It came within the scope of what Parliament had delegated to them. If Parliament appointed a clerk it must find the salary. It must give some authority to the Government to carry on the business of the country. All he could say was that a result of the appointment of Mr. Milvain was that the work was admirably done. That gentleman's whole time was given to the duties, and the work was far better done than it could be by a Member of the House with other duties, who could only give part of his time to very responsible and delicate business. He knew nothing of the motives that led to the selection of Mr. Milvain, but he knew from experience that a very competent man had been appointed. Commissions had reported on the organisation of the War Office, and Parliament had sanctioned recommendations of the Esher Committee, among which was one that the position of the Judge-Advocate-General should be revised and made separate. It was quite true that by old tradition the Judge Advocate-General was a Member of this House, but the Esher Committee pointed out that the office was not satisfactorily discharged. Mr. Gladstone did not fill up the office. Mr. Gladstone saw that the practice had arisen of giving the office of Judge-Advocate-General to some gentleman who took it for political reasons, and not necessarily for his competencs, and as this work involved the examination of countless details, it took the whole of a man's time. Mr. Gladstone took the course not merely of giving the office to a Judge, but of appointing a deputy Judge Advocate-General who received a salary of £1,500 a year, and did the real work of the office. They all knew that the late Sir Francis Jeune had many other duties to perform. He was President of a great Court; his time was fully occupied; and he could therefore give very little time to the discharge of the duties of Judge Advocate-General, which fell into the hands of a deputy, the law clerk who was under him. The Esher Committee came to the conclusion that the work of this great and responsible office was not being satisfactorily discharged. They accordingly recommended the appointment of somebody who should give his whole time to the work, and the gentleman selected for the duty was to be given a salary of £2,000 a year. That would take the place of the £1,500 paid to the deputy, and there was another payment of £500 a year from the office. He had no hesitation in saying that the present system was the better of the two. Sir Francis Jeune was not responsible to Parliament, and he had under him somebody who was responsible only to himself. Under the present system, if there was any miscarriage of justice or failure to look after legal proceedings, he (Mr. Haldane) was himself responsible and must bear the brunt of it. The Judge Advocate-General reported to him and was his official, and it was his duty to see that as an official he discharged the duties attaching to his position. What was the case with Sir Francis Jeune? Sir Francis Jeune was responsible directly to the Crown, but as he was not in Parliament there was no means of criticising his conduct. To-day they had direct responsibility to Parliament, and they had a gentleman in that position who was doing the work in a thoroughly satisfactory fashion. As things stood at the present time it seemed to him that the present arrangement was the more businesslike one, as compared with that under which the office was delegated to a Judge who could not perform the functions himself, but had to leave them to a subordinate. Seeing that in the old days it was possible to appoint to the office someone who might have been wholly out of practice at the Bar, and who was put in because he was a politician of standing for whom it was desired to find some office under the Crown, he was bound to say that he thought that they now had probably a better working arrangement than they had ever had before. He said, as the Minister responsible, that the work was being satisfactorily done and that the office was in efficient hands. Be that as it might, he succeeded to that arrangement, which was made before his time and over which to a certain extent he had no control, seeing that a contract had been entered into with the personal occupant of the office, by which contract the Government of the day was bound.

MR. PAUL: Is not the money found by Parliament?

MR. HALDANE said that Parliament found the money for all things done by the Government within the scope of the authority which had been delegated to it. Parliament had before it the Report of the Esher Committee and it sanctioned that Report. Under the circumstances he felt that it was a proposition which it was very difficult to controvert that the Minister of the day, succeeding to the obligations of his prodecessor as he had done, had to take them as he found them. Speaking for himself he thought it would be very disastrous if such an arrangement, which not only in itself was working well, but which was an arrangement which certainly came within the purview of what Parliament generally sanctioned when it approved of the recommendations of the Esher Committee, should be repealed or set aside by the Government, who had succeeded, after all, to the responsibilities of those who came before.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) remarked that no one could complain of the tone of the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen who had moved and seconded the Motion before the House. They had raised a question to which undoubtedly great importance was attached by many Members of the House. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had shown that the position in which the House was placed now was really more advantageous than the position in which it stood when the late Judge Advocate-General was in office. As the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, the House at that time had no effective means of criticising the acts of the late Judge Advocate-General. If he might make a suggestion to the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment, it would be that a more fitting occasion on which to press this matter, if he desired to develop it further than would be possible to-night, would be when they discussed the salary of the Judge Advocate-General or the salary of the War Secretary.

MR. PAUL: I find that we have already voted Mr. Milvain's salary.

MR. FORSTER pointed out that at all events the hon. Member would have an opportunity of dealing with the question when they came to the salary of the War Secretary. He had only risen to say that those who sat with him were grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the defence he had made of the present occupant of the office, and he could only say, speaking for himself, that he should support the right hon. Gentleman if they went to a division on the Amendment.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield) admitted the inconvenience of discussing at that late hour a grave constitutional question such as that raised by his hon. friend. He had called the attention of the Secretary of State for War to this question on an early date after the session began, and he thought the views the right hon. Gentleman had placed before the House that night were not quite accurate in all particulars. This matter of the position of the Judge Advocate-General raised a very serious question indeed, namely, the question of whether the occupant of that office should be a Minister with direct access to the Sovereign and directly responsible to Parliament. His right hon. friend was in direct conflict with the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General. There was a discussion on the subject in the year 1904 when the late Government was in office. Mr. Milvain had not then received the appointment, but a vacancy was occasioned by the death of Sir John Scott, the deputy Judge Advocate-General. His learned friend the Attorney-General at that time drew the attention of the House to the constitutional and legal position of the question. He said—

> "The question was one of considerable constitutional gravity. The general proposition he should invite the House to accept was that the post of Judge Advocate-General ought to be held by someone who was not merely a Minister of the Crown responsible to the Crown, but also directly responsible to Parliament."

Committees of this House in 1860, 1868, and 1888 all agreed that the Judge Advocate-General ought to be a Member of this House, responsible to the House and with direct access to the Sovereign. That was very strongly held by Sir John Mowbray, one of the most experienced Members of the House, and who himself once filled the office of Judge Advocate-General. The present Attorney-General said—

> "It was now clear that the Judge Advocate-General was a Minister of the Crown, responsible to the Sovereign for the discharge of the duties attaching to his office, and he held the office of Privy Councillor in order that he might give advice personally to the King. He was not responsible to anyone connected with the War Office."

He (Sir James Woodhouse) asked the House to mark that. The hon. and learned Gentleman whom he was quoting went on to show that the Judge Advocate-General was Minister of Justice of the Army, the vast interests he had under his control, and the vital importance of his being independent of the Secretary of State for War. That was the real issue before the House to-night. The question was whether the position of this man was to be that of an official subordinate to, and under the control of, the Secretary of State, or whether he was to be independent of the Secretary of State, and responsible to this House. It was for that reason that he had looked very carefully into the matter, and realised that a great constitutional question was raised which they had had no opportunity of discussing before. To-night the House ought to be careful before it endorsed what had been done in this matter; Did the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State approve of the appointment when it was made? Certainly not. There was not a member of this Ministry who approved of the appointment. In 1904 when they discussed the question the present Prime Minister absolutely disposed of what had been said by the Secretary of State for War. The Secretary of State relied on the fact that in 1892 Mr. Gladstone and the present Prime Minister, who was then Secretary of State for War, appointed the late President of the Probate Court, Sir Francis Jeune. But on the 17th of March, 1904, the present Prime Minister said that the appointment was never intended to be permanent, and that it was intended only for a temporary purpose. The Government went out of office a year or two afterwards, and the appointment had been continued during the whole of the remaining period by the late Government until the death of Sir Francis Jeune, and the death of the deputy Advocate-General. It was not, therefore, correct to say that that was a precedent for this appointment. No one had written more strongly disapproving of the appointment on legal and constitutional grounds than the present Attorney-General. Behind this matter a much greater issue was involved than his right hon. friend would lead the House to believe. There was not always in the position of Secretary of State for War a great legal luminary. Imagine the late Secretary of State for War reviewing as a judicial officer the evidence brought before courts-martial for which the Judge-Advocate-General was responsible. If they could get a direct issue before the House on the question of the expediency of this officer being dependent on, or independent of, the House he was perfectly sure that they would arrive at a conclusion in favour of the view of the present Prime Minister.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) suggested that the hon. Member for Northampton should withdraw his Motion and bring the question up on the salary of the Secretary of State for War. This was a grave matter raising a constitutional question, and an issue of that kind could not possibly be satisfactorily discussed at this hour of the morning. It would be impossible to regard a division on the Second Reading of the Army Annual Bill as in any sense reflecting the opinion of the Members of the House on this question. The Army Estimates would be shortly before the House, and it would be possible for the hon. Gentleman to raise the question then in an effective way, and it would be possible to take a division on a nominal reduction of the salary of the Secretary of State, which possibly would reflect the real opinion of the House.

MR. PAUL said if he were to raise the question on the salary of the right hon. Gentleman it would not be a direct issue. [AN HON. MEMBER: It would.] He did not think he could withdraw the Motion.

*MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said the office of Judge-Advocate-General was a judicial one. The Judge-Advocate-General might be something else, but he was certainly a judge. It had generally been the policy of this House and the country that judges should not hold political office or sit in the House of Commons. A judge ought not to come in and go out with the Government; he ought to be entirely independent of any political or party considerations. Besides that, judicial decisions should not be subject to review in this House. He sincerely hoped that the House would support the decision arrived at by the late and the present Government.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) said that all appointments were made subject to the voting of salaries by Parliament, that even judges could be removed by an address, and that he could not believe that the Judge-Advocate-General was absolutely entitled to hold office until he was seventy years of age, which was five years beyond the ordinary term of employment of a civil servant.

MR. W. RUTHERFORD moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. William Rutherford.*)

The House divided:—Ayes 23; Noes 191. (Division List No. 34.)

AYES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgmane, W. Clive
Cave, George
Dalrymple, Viscount
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hill, Henry Staveley (Staff'sh.)
Hunt, Rowland
Meysey-Thompson, Major E. C.
Morpeth, Viscount
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Watson Rutherford and Viscount Helmsley

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beaumont, Hubert (Eastbourne
Beaumont, W. C. B. (Hexham)
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W
Brace, William
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn. Richard Knight
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clarke, C. Goddard (Peckham)
Clough, W.

Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C.H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (MontgomeryCo.
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St. Pancras,N
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth,Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert,Colonel Ivor(Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Horniman, Emslie John
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh Alexander
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Arthur, William
M'Crae, George
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Molteno, Percy Alfred
Mond, A.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Murray, James
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shee, James John
Paul, Herbert
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, E. P. (Salisbury)
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Wardle, George J.
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Woodhouse,SirJ.T (Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. George Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. PAUL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to give the House an early opportunity of discussing this question and taking a division in Committee of Supply.

MR. HALDANE said it would be open to his hon. friend to move a reduction of his salary.

MR. PAUL asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at nineteen minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 29th March, 1906.

EARL OF BESSBOROUGH.

Ordered, That the Report of the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom, made to the House of Lords on Tuesday last, that the right of the Earl of Bessborough to vote at the elections of representative peers for Ireland has been established to his satisfaction, be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, together with a certificate stating that such report has been made, and that the House has ordered it to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

Several Lords took the Oath.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

South Lancashire Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn; the Order made on the 8th instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Mersey Railway Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Wolstanton United Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Norwich Union Life Assurance Society Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Great Central and Lancashire, Derbyshire, and East Coast Railways Bill [H.L.] Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Mirfield Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Wirral Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bridgewater Canals Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Channel Ferry Railway and Quay Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Rugby Subordinate School Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed.

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway (Purchase) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed.

Folkestone and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Sheffield Assay Office Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION.

Petitions in favour of denominational religious teaching in schools—

Of the Founder, Trustees, and Managers of a school at Charnock-Richard.

Of teachers in schools at Mawdsley; Walkden; Euxton; Mosley Common; Charnock - Richard; Standis Lower Ground; Walton-le-Dale.

Of parents and guardians of children attending schools at Mosley Common; Walton-le-Dale; Euxton; Mawdsley; Standish Lower Ground; Walmsley; Charnock-Richard; Heysham; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (GENERAL).

Statement of present contributions to the Imperial Institute made by the Government of India and by the British Colonies and Protectorates

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Report of the delegates of His Majesty's Government to the International Congress on Tuberculosis, held at Paris from 2nd October to 7th October, 1905.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

Returns for the year 1904–5.

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT NETHER WALSTEAD, NEAR HAYWARD'S HEATH, SUSSEX).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Captain M. B. Lloyd, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion which occurred at Nether Walstead, near Hayward's Heath, Sussex, on 26th October, 1905.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report on American manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Vol. II.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

TRADE MARKS ACTS, 1905.

Statutory Rules and Orders made by the Board of Trade under the provisions of Section 60 of the Act.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors on March 31st, 1904, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements during the year ended March 31st, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING.

A Message ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to propose that the Joint Committee do meet in Committee Room A. on Tuesday next at Three o'clock.

NEW BILLS.

SETTLED LAND BILL [H.L.] (No. 37).

A Bill to amend the Settled Land Acts, 1882 to 1890.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL [H.L.]. (No. 38.)

A Bill to amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1882, and—

CONVEYANCING BILL [H.L.]. (No. 39.)

A Bill to amend the Conveyancing and Law of Property Act, 1881, were presented by the Lord Davey; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday next.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide for the prevention of juvenile smoking was presented by the Lord Reay; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 40.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, in accordance with the practice which has usually prevailed in this House in respect to the Consolidated Fund Bill, I propose, with your Lordships' permission, to pass it through all its stages to-day, as the Royal Assent must be given to it to-morrow. I therefore beg to move that Standing Order XXXIX. be considered in order to its being suspended for this day's sitting.

Moved, That Standing Order XXXIX. be considered in order to its being suspended for this day's sitting.—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

Ou Question, Motion agreed to.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order); Committee negatived; then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been suspended) Bill read 3^a, and passed.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.E.].

Order of the day read for the House going into Committee.

LORD HYLTON: My Lords, in moving that the House resolve itself into Committee on this Bill I am very anxious not to stand between your Lordships and the Motion on the Paper in the name of my noble friend Lord Halifax. A number of Amendments to my Bill have been put down by the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, I am quite willing to accept them all, and I would suggest to your Lordships that the most convenient course, one which has been agreed to by the noble Earl opposite, is that the Bill should pass through Committee without Amendment and that the Amendments should be made in the Standing Committee.

Moved, That the House resolve itself into Committee on this Bill.—(*Lord Hylton.*)

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, I rise to make an appeal to the noble Lord opposite. A great number of Amendments to this Bill have been put down by the Local Government Board. They are very complicated Amendments and rather difficult to understand. My noble friend has expressed his willingness to accept those Amendments. I would suggest to him that he should withdraw his Bill and have it reprinted with the Amendments incorporated. The Bill would then be intelligible to your Lordships. For myself, I approve entirely of the principle of the Bill. There are, however, one or two matters in it which require consideration, and this observation applies also to the Amendments standing in the name of my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture. If my noble friend in charge of the Bill would pursue the course I have suggested it would not interfere with the prospects of the Measure, but enable it to be much better considered and render it more intelligible.

LORD HYLTON: I hope my noble friend will not press that suggestion. These Amendments are all practically accepted. I trust the House will agree to the course which I have proposed.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House in Committee (according to Order).

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): I understand that no Amendments are to be proposed at this stage.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON) intimated that that was so.

Bill passed through Committee, and reported without Amendment to the House and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

THE CASE OF MR. JOSEPH NELSON.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I desire, in accordance with the Notice standing in my name on the Paper, to call attention to the case of Mr. Joseph Nelson, lately chief officer of the British steamer "Aro," who, on a charge of shooting a Krooboy labourer on board that vessel, was found guilty by a coloured jury at Sierra Leone, and sentenced to nine months imprisonment; and to ask whether, in view of the circumstances of this case, His Majesty's Government will be pleased to recommend the immediate release of Mr. Nelson.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I have to say, in reply, that I am much obliged to the noble Lord for giving me certain information in addition to the evidence which was brought out at the trial. I have considered the whole case, and am of opinion that the sentence might be reduced. I will make a submission to His Majesty to that effect.

LORD MILNER.

*VISCOUNT HALIFAX rose to move to resolve, "That this House desires to place on record its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire."

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I do not bring forward the Motion which I desire to submit to your Lordships this afternoon in the interests of any party in this House. The subject is one which should be outside party considerations. Neither do I bring it forward in the interests of the late High Commissioner in South Africa, though those who have the best means of appreciating Lord Milner's services to England and the Empire have heard many things said about him within the last few days which have been painful to their ears, and have not heard what they might well have expected to hear from the lips of those who, in regard to one single incident in his career, have been so ready to blame him. It would be easy to say much on these points if I were so minded; much that, in my opinion, would be just, much that would be true. But I refrain. The matter is too important for mere personal considerations. What I desire beyond all else is to obtain the unanimous consent of your Lordships' House to this Motion, and I will not say one word which may make that consent more difficult, or put any obstacle in the way of securing it.

My Lords, the Prime Minister has used words on recent occasions to the effect that the furtherance of British interests in South Africa is as much a matter of concern to him as it is to any man. Even the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking the other day of Lord Milner's many devoted friends in South Africa, declared that he desired to send a message of peace and conciliation and encouragement to the Colonies. My Lords, that is the object of this Motion. It is on behalf of British interests in South Africa that I bring it forward. It is in order to soothe the painful feelings which will have been excited in South Africa by recent events that I ask your Lordships to assent to it. My Lords, all over South Africa Lord Milner's name stands as the name of the one man who pre-eminently and more than any other has understood and defended British interests in South Africa.

Throughout the whole of the South African Colonies you will not find a single man who has fought for England, and who, if need were, would fight for England again, who does not look to Lord Milner as the representative of all he most cares for, as the defender of all he holds most dear. These men have made great sacrifices for the integrity of the Empire. They have seen their sons and their kinsfolk shot down by their sides and they have made no complaint. They have sacrificed their property—for it is not the loyal English who have been forward to press their claims for compensation—but they have not grudged those sacrifices. They have been consoled by the thought that those sacrifices have not been made in vain, that the man who fought their battles and represented their interests, to whose foresight, determination, courage, and firmness they believe that South Africa forms to-day a part of the British Empire, had at least won the gratitude and esteem of his country, and that the policy he had so successfully inaugurated, which was indeed succeeding so well and which would, there can be no doubt, succeed so completely if it were given time to develop and take root, was firmly established and was not to be reversed in deference to party politics and the exigencies of party warfare.

This, my Lords, till a short time ago, was their hope and their consolation. What do they see now? They see a single point in Lord Milner's career, a point as nothing in the long list of his services, sought out for censure. They see it not obscurely hinted that his work is to be destroyed. They see it stated by one speaker on behalf of the Government that the ideals, the principles, the policies for which he has toiled are entirely discredited, that the schemes which he has pursued with all his energies, into which, as he has himself said, he has thrown his whole soul, are about to be reversed, his work to be undone, that though he once counted for much in the councils of this country, he is now nothing, and has ceased to be a factor in political life, that though he could once direct, he is now powerless. That is what they hear said by a responsible Minister of the Crown, and then, galling beyond all else, galling to themselves, galling because it seems to threaten all that has been won by the late war, they see the triumph of all those who were beaten in that war, at the slight put upon the man who, more than any other, stands for British supremacy and Imperial interests in South Africa.

My Lords, I know South Africa fairly well. I know what will be said when the news of recent events in England reaches that country. The men who have fought our battles will be fiercely indignant. Their hearts will turn as one man to Lord Milner, who, they will feel, has been so unjustly treated, and then, which is the more dangerous symptom, they will begin to say as they said in 1881–2: "What is the object of being loyal to England? She will neither stand by her own sons nor by us. She has great servants, greater than any other nation. She is better served than any nation ever was served in the history of the world; she breeds up a race of men above all suspicion of seeking their personal interests, incorruptible, courageous, high-minded, not afraid of responsibility, shrinking from no labour and no toil—such a man as is the late High Commissioner of South Africa—and see how she treats them." One error, one unintentional error—if indeed the error be a fact—an error which he has taken on himself, because he is too loyal to throw over a subordinate, and all else is apparently forgotten. His past services, great and illustrious, are as nothing, they are not even mentioned, and, so far as those who attack him are concerned, his case is dismissed with the contemptuous plea that so powerless is he now to do further mischief, so vanished are all his ideals, so remote all the objects for which he strove, that mercy may be shown him, nay, that those now in power can even afford to be generous and extend to him that measure of contemptuous pity which would not have been accorded him were it not for the fact that he still has many friends in South Africa who would deeply resent a more severe treatment.

My Lords, Lord Milner has still many friends, and they are not confined to South Africa; but of those who were his friends amongst those who now hold the reins of power, some of whom composed the throng who wished him God-speed when he started to take up the government of South Africa, which of them has thought it worth while to remind the country of all his past services, and of the debt England and the Empire owe him? Is this an exaggerated statement? There is indeed one exception, I recognise it with gladness, and I thank him for it. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies did indeed speak of—

> "those years of stress during which Lord Milner's conduct would not be forgotten by his countrymen,"

but who else has spoken in the same key? So little is it the case that the Under-Secretary for the Colonies could find nothing better to say about Lord Milner than to compare him with Mr. Parnell, and to say that in a similar matter Mr. Parnell was innocent and that Lord Milner was guilty.

I wish the task had fallen to worthier hands than mine; but in face of such statements let me at least recall to your recollection Lord Milner's conduct before the war, during the war, and after the war. And having done so, I will ask your Lordships to say whether you do not think that justice and honour alike require some redress of the balance, some acknowledgment of Lord Milner's services to the Empire which may express the real feeling of the country, and may relieve us of the charge of base ingratitude to a great public servant. I will say nothing about Egypt, and the prosperity of Egypt so largely due to Lord Milner's exertions. I will say nothing of his work for the Inland Revenue, but I will confine myself to South Africa.

I will ask your Lordships to carry your thoughts back to the year 1897, the year after the Jameson Raid. Remember the state of South Africa at that time. Affairs in the Transvaal were in a more dangerous state than ever. The grievances of the Uitlanders were further from any redress. The British were insulted and despised. The Transvaal was arming, denying the rights of the paramount Power, and preparing to assert its absolute independence, an independence incompatible with British supremacy in South Africa, at the first opportunity. It has been said again recently that it was owing to the Jameson Raid and Lord Milner's own action that war supervened. Those who so speak must surely have forgotten that before Lord Milner came to South Africa, prior to and apart from the Raid, the Transvaal had been arming upon a scale entirely unwarranted by any possible legitimate necessities.

In the manifesto of the National Union, published in Johannesburg, on December 27th, 1895, it was openly stated, and the correctness of the statement has never been denied, that £250,000 was to be spent by the Boer Government upon the completing of the fort at Pretoria, and £100,000 upon a fort to overawe the inhabitants of Johannesburg, that large orders were being sent to Krupps for big guns, that maxims had been ordered, and that German officers were to be sent out to drill the burghers. Repeated attempts had previously been made by the Transvaal to get control of affairs in Bechuanaland, Matabeleland, and Zululand. Dr. Leyds had already been in Europe looking for allies, and there is every reason to suppose that in one case at least he had been successful. In a speech made by President Kruger at the German Club in Johannesburg, on January 26th, 1895, there was the following statement—

> "Amongst other places I visited Germany, where I was received by the Kaiser. The Kaiser received me as the representative of a grown-up Republic. I was courteously treated and was able to enter into a treaty with Germany."

—this was before the Raid—

> "Our Republic being recognized as an important country. . . . I know I may count on the Germans in future. I hope the Transvaalers will do their best to strengthen and increase the friendship that exists between them. . . We are growing up, and although we are young, we are feeling that if one nation tries to annex us the other will try to stop it."

Your Lordships will remember, in this connection, the German Emperor's telegram to President Kruger after the Raid. It is scarcely denied that there had been a previous correspondence between Germany and the Transvaal which could not be avowed. Your Lordships will remember also the determination of the Transvaal to reject any control on the part of England in regard to its foreign relations. Can any one doubt, in view of such facts, that when Lord Milner came to South Africa there was a distinct determination on the part of the Transvaal to deny any control by the paramount Power, and gradually to substitute the Transvaal as the leading Power in South Africa in the place of England?

In Cape Colony itself the state of affairs was hardly more satisfactory. Lord Milner found himself face to face with a Government which was more than unwilling to take the necessary steps for the defence of the colony, and which, in fact, did connive at the transmission of arms into the Transvaal immediately before the break-out of the war. He had to meet the insidious and mischievous action of the Bond. The hostility of the Afrikander element was growing day by day. The difficulties caused by the internal state of Cape Colony were indeed great. How few there are who realise the task of patience and firmness achieved by Lord Milner, and the triumph of his personal character, in getting through all the time of Mr. Schreiner's Afrikander Government without a break.

In respect to the Transvaal, let any one read the record of the negotiations at the Bloemfontein Conference, and he must be convinced of the patience and forbearance shown by Lord Milner throughout the whole course of those negotiations. No doubt those negotiations were doomed to failure; war was inevitable, unless this country was prepared to surrender the principle of equal rights in the Transvaal. But a weaker man would have dallied with the situation in the hope of putting off the evil day in his time; a more selfish man would have thought of his own interests, and that for them it would be well that the War which sooner or later was inevitable should not be connected with his name; a less brave man would have shrunk from the responsibility of a decision. But Lord Milner was neither selfish nor a coward. He saw what was essential for British interests and he refused to surrender it—for that he stood firm as a rock. It depended upon his attitude and determination whether South Africa should become a Dutch Republic in all but the name. We owe it to him that South Africa remains within the sphere of British influence to-day.

It was not he who broke the peace. In the hope of peace he had permitted delay even after delay had become a danger. For nearly two years he had patiently studied the situation. Throughout that time there were a hundred possibilities of a quarrel with Pretoria, questions arising out of Uitlander grievances, wrongs of British coloured subjects, veiled breaches of the Convention, and so forth, and he showed a forbearance to which justice has never been done. The first occasion on which he used any plainness to Pretoria was in a despatch of March 10th, 1899, dealing with the maltreatment of Cape coloured people in the Transvaal, a fact which is not without significance at the present moment. But by his action, when the time for action arrived, he saved South Africa to the Empire; and because he saved it he secured the undying enmity of those whose plans he had defeated, whose aspirations he had thwarted, and whose carefully conceived preparations for asserting their entire independence and supremacy, long and skilfully laid, he had brought to naught. My Lords, it is a good thing to be generous to your enemies; to construct a golden bridge over which they may retreat is indeed the secret of all politics; but it is no less a good thing, it is even a greater duty to support your friends. It would seem that we have amongst us some who think that to vilify their friends and to justify and excuse their opponents is the height of political wisdom.

I turn to the late High Commissioner's conduct during the war. Do people in England realise sufficiently how serious the condition of things was in South Africa, and especially in Cape Colony, when the war began? Speaking generaally, it would be difficult to exaggerate the extent of the difficulties that confronted Lord Milner in Cape Colony during the war and after. It only required an advance of the Boer forces into Cape Colony for a great part of that colony to have risen in arms. There is no one in South Africa who doubts that if, instead of besieging Ladysmith and Kimberley, the Boer forces had advanced on Durban, and above all on Cape Town, England might have had to fight for a landing at Cape Town itself.

General Smuts has recently been saying that the mistake the Boers made during the war was not acting on the offensive. The man who drove our wagon from Mafeking to Pretoria had been a Boer farmer. He had fought against us through the whole war; he had been at the siege of Ladysmith. He was one of the last to hold out and one of the few who made his submission too late to obtain compensation I like the man, and I do not blame him for his conduct. What he said might not always be reliable, but he did say one thing the truth of which, from the manner and determination with which he said it, I cannot doubt—

> "At the siege of Ladysmith, we younger men," he said, "went to General Botha and entreated him to press forward. We urged an advance into Natal, above all we urged an advance into Cape Colony. When the Boer generals refused to make that advance we knew it was all up; but, by God," he added, "if we had advanced, we should have won."

Such was the state of Cape Colony with which Lord Milner had to deal Then came the news of British reverses We know what those black days were in England. What do you think it must have been to those on the spot? I suppose in the history of the world there has hardly been a greater feat of arms than that a country like this, so many thousand miles away, should have been able to transport across so many thousand miles of sea a force such as England landed in South Africa. It was almost a still greater feat to feed that Army as that Army was fed. But, great as those feats were, legitimate as is the pride that it is this England of ours which performed these feats, have we not also reason to be proud of the Englishman who, in the midst of such difficulties, never flinched, was never turned back from his purpose, never abandoned his courage, was equal to all emergencies, and, in the darkest moments never despaired of his country's success.

I have travelled over most of South Africa. Wherever you go, at every wayside store, wherever you find English settlers, colonists proud of the English name, with hearts bound up in the fortunes of Great Britain, there Lord Milner's name is a household word. "He," they say with one voice, "is the man to whom we owe everything. He it is who stemmed the movement"—a movement which, if it had been successful and how nearly it succeeded none knew so well as they—"would have separated us from the mother country and left. us settlers in a Dutch land." Think of these men, the loyalists in South Africa. Think how touching, how pathetic their loyalty to this country is—this country which has often treated them so ill. And, remembering that loyalty and remembering their sacrifices, tell them in a way that none can mistake that what has recently been said in Parliament is no proof of a reversal of the past. Tell them that the present Government, no less than the past, are determined to maintain the integrity of the British Empire and the supremacy of Great Britain in South Africa; that Lord Milner's services to the Crown and the Empire are appreciated as they deserve at home, and that England is not again, in the face of the warnings afforded by history, and in the light of the experience of past years, about to repeat the fatal mistake made after Majuba, and sacrifice the real supporters of the Empire for those who care little for England, nothing for the Empire, and who, if they could, would establish an Afrikander Republic throughout the whole of South Africa.

I turn now to the record of Lord Milner's work in South Africa after the war. Have your Lordships ever considered how great, how enormous the work is that has been done for the reconstruction and reorganisation of South Africa since the war? Lord Milner found the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, as the result of war, in ruins. He has left them on the high road to recovery. That they have not recovered sooner is due to financial causes, which neither Lord Milner nor any other man living could control. What he has done in a land denuded of all apparatus of government is to create an admirable machine, efficient for the government of the country, and after the ravages of the war to set the country once more on the path of moral and material prosperity.

The amount of work in regard to reconstruction that has been inaugurated and carried through by the band of workers under Lord Milner's guidance and under Lord Milner's government is simply colossal. I should doubt whether it had a parallel in history. Let me enumerate a few of the things that have been done. The Statute-book has been reduced to reasonable proportions and put in an orderly form. The steady, incorruptible administration of justice under a Supreme Court which has no superior in any British colony has been organised. A new life has been infused into agriculture. Experimental farms have been started. Stock of a high class has been introduced. The planting of forests has been undertaken —a point of vital importance to the prosperity of the Colonies. Municipal institutions as liberal as any in the world have been created. Free schools containing twice as many children as at any previous period have been started. New provision for higher technical training has been made. A careful scientific study of the great problem of irrigation in all its branches has been set on foot. Two hundred and seventy-five miles of new railway have been completed; 311 miles are in course of construction and 488 miles arranged for. The management of telegraphs and telephones has been greatly improved. Asylums and hospitals have been built. Some 1,300 miles of road have been repaired, and anyone who knows South Africa will realise what a boon that is.

A great work has been done in regard to schemes for land settlement; but on this I need not dwell, for it was touched upon by Lord Milner himself in this House two days ago.† I would only desire to emphasise again how important that work is as a link between British and Dutch, and as a reconciler of differences if only time is given it to bear its proper fruit. The economic side of the land settlement is important; the political side is more important still. I turn to what Lord Milner has done for the native population. His administration has conferred on the natives great benefits; he has been their great protector he has stood by them in Swaziland and in Basutoland. His name is associated with the humane treatment of the natives and respect for their rights to the very fullest extent. He has asserted over and over again his belief in the principle of equal rights for every civilised man. At the same time he has had the wisdom to look for the vindication of that principle to the gradual change of opinion in South Africa itself. It is a South African question, and anyone who knows the feeling of South Africa on the subject will endorse Lord Milner's words in the last speech he made at Johannesburg on the subject when he said that—

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1031-2.

> "Nothing could be worse in principle or likely to be more unfortunate in its results than to attempt the solution of it, even in a right direction, by external pressure."

I will only refer to one other point, to the fact that it is Lord Milner's policy which has made the eventual federation of South Africa possible. It is bad enough in Europe to have rival States intriguing one against another, involving perpetual anxiety as to the European equilibrium; but it would be an intolerable state of things in South Africa. Such however was the state of things before the war, and it was largely due to the perpetual menace resulting from the action of the Transvaal—at one time intriguing with Germany, at another time encouraging the jealousy of Natal against the Cape. That with the assertion of British supremacy this has ceased to be the case is due to Lord Milner. I have endeavoured to keep the one issue plain and simple before your Lordships' House. I have hardly entered into the disputed question of Chinese labour, though on that my opinion is clear and decided. I have taken the matter on the broad lines of Lord Milner's services to his country.

The incident for which Lord Milner has been blamed, which has been utilised as an opportunity for attacking him, is, my Lords, a question which very little deserves the importance which has been given to it. The study of the Blue-book reveals that, if Lord Milner sanctioned anything in a conversation of which he has himself no remembrance, it was such slight caning as I should suppose we and our children have all been exposed to at school, no doubt very much to our advantage; and so far as it was abused, that abuse took place after Lord Milner had left South Africa, and it was an abuse of which he was entirely ignorant. Could anyone say that such an incident as that is to be put into comparison with the long list of Lord Milner's services, and that it is either just or generous, or such treatment as we should expect from our friends and countrymen, that this alone should be mentioned, and no mention made of the many and the devoted services, extending now over many years, which have marked Lord Milner's distinguished career at home, in Egypt, and in South Africa? *Suppressio veri, suggestio falsi.*

I appeal to your Lordships to redress the balance, to hold the scales of justice true and level. It is not Lord Milner's character which is at stake. It is the character of his countrymen for justice, generosity, and for fair and equal dealing. These are at stake; and there is something more at stake also. Let me quote some words in the speech made by Lord Milner in this House a short time ago. Those words sum up the whole matter—

> "My Lords," he said, "from my point of view the alienation of South Africa is too high a price to pay for another swing of the pendulum at home; for the pendulum may swing backwards and forwards many times, but South Africa once lost will be lost for ever."

Before I sit down, I will once again ask your Lordships to accept unanimously the Motion I have had the honour to place before your Lordships' House. I have said that I do not bring this Motion forward so much in the interests of Lord Milner as in those of South Africa. Speaking on 26th July, at a dinner given him at Birmingham, not quite six years ago, the present Under-Secretary for the Colonies said—I am quoting from *The Times* report of 27th July, 1900—

> "The removal of Sir Alfred Milner from the control of South African affairs at the present time would be a greater blow to Imperial interests than the defeats of Magersfontein, Stormberg, Colenso, and Spion Kop put together."

May I not appeal from "Philip drunk to Philip sober," and suggest to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies that he need not concern himself too seriously with the recent utterances for which his Under-Secretary has been responsible? I believe he who made them must wish nothing so much as that they should be consigned to the oblivion which they deserve. Certainly the circumstances are as dissimilar as the men;

but in this respect, at least, the circumstances which attended the discussion in the House of Commons on Lord Clive's conduct are not unlike those of to-day. By a vote the House of Commons implied that Lord Clive had been guilty of an illegality; by another they declared that he had rendered great and meritorious services to his country. The House of Commons has done the former, it is for your Lordships' House to complete its action and supply the latter.

*LORD AMPTHILL: My Lords, I rise to second the Resolution which has been moved by the noble Viscount on my right; and if I venture to intervene in this debate it is because there are several reasons which seem to me to impose that duty upon me. When I returned to England three weeks ago I had no intention of taking any further part in the business of your Lordships' House than that of a dutiful listener, unless, indeed, the affairs with which I had been actually concerned for the past five years were to come up for discussion. I did not anticipate such a discussion as this, which concerns in a general way all those who have had the honour, or who have at present the honour, of serving His Majesty in different parts of the Empire.

As one who has held a post in some respects similar to that which Lord Milner held, I think I can speak—and I feel that I ought to speak—from the standpoint of the servants of the Crown in India and the Colonies; as one who has been living for some time past far removed from the noise, the smoke, and the confusion of the conflict of political Parties in this country, I trust that I can speak without the prejudice or the bias of a Party politician; and as one who has seen the effects of the action of Parliament on our fellow citizens, whether they be Englishmen or whether they belong to other races, in a distant part of the Empire, I hope that I can give your Lordships a correct impression of how such action is likely to be regarded by those fellow citizens of ours who are as much concerned in it as the voters in the United Kingdom, although they care but little for the struggles of political Parties in this country.

But before I endeavour to explain this standpoint any further, let me plainly state once more the object of this debate as it appears to me. A vote in Parliament has condemned a single act in the long and brilliant public service of one who is admitted by all fair-minded and reasonable men to be one of the most capable, single-minded, and devoted public servants that the Empire has seen for several generations. That vote stands alone as the only formal reference to Lord Milner on the journals of Parliament; for, although Lord Milner's name is not mentioned in the Resolution, no doubt whatever will exist in the minds of future generations as to the responsibility for the act which has thus been condemned. I shall refrain, for the reason I have already indicated, from questioning the discretion of the House of Commons; but I desire to express my strong conviction—a conviction which I know is shared by many, not only in this House but also outside of it—that the opinion of the nation will not be fully recorded on the journals of Parliament unless there be entered on them some further and more definite reference to Lord Milner's services in South Africa. The object of the Resolution which has been so eloquently proposed by the noble Viscount is to remedy the omission which has taken place and to make the formal records of Parliament in accord with the feelings of the nation.

I take it that one of the functions of this House is to do that which the House of Commons has left undone, whether the omission be due to accident or to the exigencies of Parliamentary procedure; and particularly if the omission be not in accordance with the real feeling of Parliament and, above all, with the real feeling of the nation. It is part of the larger function of this House, which is to see that the final verdict of Parliament is that of which the nation really approves. For this purpose, I take it, both Houses of Parliament are as one, and unless there be a direct conflict of opinion, the vote of one House is equivalent to the vote of the other. The House of Lords is, in one particular sense, as truly representative of the nation as the House of Commons. The House of Commons is, in another sense, less representative of the people than the House of Lords. It would be irrelevant if I were on this occasion to endeavour to explain my meaning at length, but I feel convinced that your Lordships will recognise the truth of the principle of which I venture to remind you if I merely point to the constant changes in the political complexion of the House of Commons, and the extraordinary and anomalous results of the present system of representation, whichever Party may be in power.

My Lords, the British nation is not a political weathercock. Whatever be the changes on the surface, there are certain settled convictions and unalterable principles deep down in the hearts of the people. The sea may be rough or smooth, it may be blue or grey, but it remains salt; and so it is with the British nation. The House of Lords represents, or ought to represent, the permanent principles and settled convictions of the people of this country It stands for the depths which remain undisturbed by the commotion, however terrible, which may for a while take place on the surface of the sea. Whatever may be before us, let us remember our true function and let us endeavour to speak, not for ourselves, but for the nation. Those noble Lords who were here two nights ago cannot fail to retain a vivid remembrance of the impressive exhortation—I might even say warning—which was addressed to us by the noble Lord who supported the Lord Chancellor's Criminal Appeal Bill from the Front Opposition Bench. The nation as a whole, has no Party, and you have only to mix with Englishmen in the distant parts of the Empire and watch Party conflict far away from the din and dust and confusion to realise how small a thing it is, and how little it affects the true progress of our race.

And now, my Lords, what are the predominant characteristics of the British race? I think that nine men out of ten would answer that they are generosity and a love of fair play. If this be so, it is on these grounds that I exhort you to make the voice of Parliament in accord with the real heart of the nation. The Britisher admires pluck, perseverance, and devotion to duty. and in circumstances of ordinary life he is always ready to accord his tribute of admiration to any man who displays those qualities, whatever may be his personal feelings towards him, and however much he may be out of sympathy with the objects of that man's endeavours. It is on that principle that I ask your Lordships to accord to Lord Milner that which the whole nation must regard as his due. Was Lord Nelson censured because, on one occasion, he turned his blind eye to the signal and disobeyed orders? Have any of the great leaders of our Armies, of not one of whom can it be said that he never made a mistake—have they gone without thanks or without reward? Yet those who most strongly condemn Lord Milner's action or inaction, whichever it was, do not attribute to him anything more than an error of judgment, nor do they deny the greatness of his public services.

This is no Party question, nor is it a matter of antagonism between this House and the House of Commons. It is merely a matter of making the verdict of Parliament complete and correct. Noble Lords opposite can vote for this Resolution with perfect consistency and perfect loyalty to the leaders of the Party which is now in power. I understand, from conversation which I have had the advantage of having with more than one noble Lord opposite, that they imagine that the terms of this Resolution commit them to approval of each and every one of Lord Milner's acts. I venture to say that that is a most extraordinary misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the ordinary meaning of the English language. Although there are many belonging to the Party of which I am a member who disapproved of many of the acts of Mr. Gladstone, was there, or is there, one of them who would deny his claim to greatness on account of his valuable services to this country? Do we refuse to accord the tribute of admiration and appreciation to great soldiers, to great sailors, to painters to poets, to literary men, because we cannot admire, or because we disapprove of one or other of their works? I feel sure that at any rate those outside this House will not consider that noble Lords opposite are committing themselves to approval of every one of Lord Milner's acts if they vote for this Resolution. I trust that nothing will be said on this side of the House which will deter them from doing so, and I for one shall be disappointed if, during the course of our debate, this question in any way becomes a Party one. But, at the same time, I am bound to say that the action of my friends on this side of the House must depend upon the course which is taken by His Majesty's Ministers on the other side.

The noble Viscount and I have come as messengers of peace, and if the olive branch which we have tendered is rejected, there will be no alternative for those who follow us but to accept the gauge of battle. My Lords, let us show the nation that the House of Lords can treat a question from the national point of view, and let us thus give an earnest of our intention to treat future questions with which we have to deal—and there will be many of great importance—in a similar manner. No moment could be more opportune than the present one to make a beginning in that way. There is in this House a majority as overwhelming and disproportionate to the minority as is the majority, with Parties reversed, in the other House. I can only speak for myself, but I assure noble Lords opposite that I consider it my first duty as a Peer to see that the will of the nation is carried out when it is known, and when it is not known to see that it is rightly ascertained. And in this matter there can be no doubt whatever that the nation would not tolerate a single condemnation of an eminent public servant for a single act to override and cancel all his claims to gratitude and appreciation.

I now return to the point from which I began, and I ask, How can we expect that the servants of the Crown in the Colonies and dependencies of the Empire should act with courage and with confidence, and act on their own responsibility if they feel that the slightest mistake is liable to expose them to the severest punishment? I venture to claim that I know something of the anxieties of such men. Although, as Governor of Madras, I experienced no difficulties or anxieties which can compare with those of Lord Milner in South Africa, the position was one in which I could fairly estimate what they were; and at any rate for eight months I held a position of the greatest anxiety and responsibility as Viceroy of India. I therefore know something of the feelings of men in such positions, and I tell your Lordships that the recent vote of the other House is likely to chill the courage and diminish the confidence of the men who administer the Colonies and dependencies of the Crown and thus impair the two qualities which they most need, and which have, more than any others, gone to build up our great Empire. And what of our fellow-subjects abroad who are watching the political game in this country, and who as spectators see most? I know from what I have heard among them that, rightly or wrongly, they attribute much that is done in Parliament to the exigencies of Party politics. I know that they are beginning to lose their pride and confidence in the British Parliament. They hate the unreasoning prejudice and the blind passion which mark the conflict of political parties in this country, and which seem to them, rightly or wrongly, to hamper the work of the Imperial Parliament. Shall we give them further cause to persist in that opinion? And what of those who are not loyal, who desire to hamper and embarrass the British Government? Will they not eagerly avail themselves of the new weapon which we are putting in their hands, and seize every opportunity of alleging illegality against the King's deputies? What could be easier, with hundreds of sharp critics on the lookout for such opportunities, for who is there who has never made a mistake or who can claim that he has never transgressed the law?

Again, the viceroys, governors, and administrators of the dependencies of the Crown represent, each in their respective sphere, the dignity and authority of the Sovereign. Is it not well, in these circumstances, that any verdict on their conduct which has the high authority of Parliament should not be liable in any way to misunderstanding, and should be in itself complete and comprehensive? Lord Milner filled for eight years the post which was universally admitted to be for the time the most arduous and responsible one in the Empire. Nobody who has not seen them with his own eyes—and I may, perhaps, tell your Lordships that I had the advantage of doing so from the Colonial Office during the first part of Lord Milner's administration—can realise in any way the enormity of the labours and the incessancy of anxiety which he had to endure. That he endured them with unexampled courage, patience, and devotion to duty is pretty well known; but the personal sacrifices which he made, the sacrifices of health, of leisure, and of fortune, have never been publicly advertised; and yet these sacrifices form part of the debt of gratitude and appreciation which the nation owes to him.

It would take a long time to detail all the acts of Lord Milner's administration, and if I attempted to do so I would to a great extent be repeating that which the noble Viscount who moved the Resolution has already said. But I think that in any circumstances it is unnecessary. The Papers which have been laid before Parliament contain all the requisite information, and have no doubt during the past eight years been attentively studied by your Lordships. Again, there have been numerous debates in both Houses of Parliament in which appreciative references have been made to Lord Milner's work, and not least of them was the eloquent and generous testimony made to him by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It will suffice if I remind your Lordships, in general terms, that Lord Milner mitigated the bitterness which naturally results from a great war by his just, tactful, and conciliatory methods, and we can none of us estimate what far greater difficulties and troubles those personal characteristics and methods of his have saved us from. He evolved order out of chaos so far as the Government of South Africa was concerned, and he averted ruin from agriculture, commerce, and industry by methods in which his courageous optimism is generally admitted to have been the principal factor.

My Lords, those are no small deeds and I venture to think that they merit the gratitude of the nation no less than the triumphs which have been won by the commanders of our fleets and the leaders of our armies. Is it too late for us to voice, on behalf of the nation, that debt of gratitude and appreciation which we owe to Lord Milner? Surely not! It would have been more graceful to have done so before, but it would be worse than graceless not to do so now. It rests with your Lordships to prove to the Empire that the British Parliament represents the British nation, and that that nation is not ungrateful, ungenerous, or unjust.

Moved to Resolve, "That this House desires to place on record its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire."—(*Viscount Halifax.*)

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, my noble friend who moved this Resolution has spoken with all the eloquence for which he is noted, and with that fervent conviction which is characteristic of him. The noble Lord who has just sat down was not less emphatic. I am afraid it is my fate to approach this subject from a somewhat different point of view. But I would ask your Lordships to believe that I approach it with no less sincerity and earnestness, though it may be with less gifts of oratory. The Resolution which the noble Lords have put before the House is one which lends itself to warm and effusive language that is grateful alike to speaker and listener. I am afraid that my arguments may, in comparison, appear somewhat cold and formal. But, at any rate, it shall be my endeavour to say nothing that may grate on the ear or leave behind it any sense of injustice, however unintentional.

A Resolution of this kind, proposing to record once and for all upon our journals our appreciation of services done, is not one to be undertaken lightly. I have not thought it necessary to examine the pages of history to seek out precedents in this matter, because I cannot help thinking that it would be impossible to find an exact precedent for the present Motion under similar circumstances. It is the fact that the thanks of Parliament have been voted to military and naval commanders on the occasion of some great action, or the completion of a brilliant campaign. But in all these cases Parliament had to deal with an incident that had closed, with a story that had come to an end. It had not to deal with a matter from which future consequences might arise. I can well imagine in such a case as that, supposing there was a dissentient or doubting minority, that it would seem ungenerous on their part not to give way to the evident judgment of the majority.

As I have used the word "ungenerous," I should like to say that in this case I should be sorry, indeed, to be supposed to be advocating anything that is ungenerous. I have always held that it was instinctive of the British nation to be generous to those who have upheld its interests in difficult circumstances, or in distant lands. If I may venture to make a personal remark, I have myself, although unworthily, profited by that instinct. For that very reason I should be the last to deny the same to other persons. Words which I have used in this House in regard to Lord Milner have been referred to. I do not wish to speak of them as generous. I thought then, and I think now, that my words were just. I do not think it will be denied in any part of this House that Lord Milner has done his work strenuously, faithfully, and disinterestedly; and has played a part which must leave its imprint for good or for ill on the pages of history. I am glad your Lordships acknowledge that declaration, because it was a declaration that was made in another place on behalf of the Government by the representative of the Government.

I would like to go a step further. I would point out that, if we were really dealing, as I think the noble Lord who last spoke seemed to imagine, with the recognition of personal characteristics, and if it were the case that all we had to consider was what he called a condemnation on a single point, I daresay it would not be difficult to get a larger amount of unanimity in the case of such a Resolution. But that is not the whole case. I have already referred to Resolutions of this character which have been passed by this House in reference to feats of arms. I would only repeat again that a victory which may have, perhaps, even far-reaching consequences, so far as the general himself is concerned who receives the thanks of this House, is a solitary act or deed standing by itself. No one can say the same of Lord Milner's career in South Africa. Certainly the noble Lords who have spoken cannot say so. My noble friend who began the debate took us through many pages of history dealing with negotiations, and with alarms of various kinds, not only in South Africa but even in Europe. Both the noble Lords who have spoken must admit that it is the policy of Lord Milner which the House is asked to consider in the Motion.

On behalf of His Majesty's Government, I have to say that we are neither to deny nor to affirm a judgment on this point here and to-day. The Government would be quite willing to discuss a question of this kind on a fitting occasion, and when they do discuss it they will be quite prepared to express their opinion frankly. But in spite of some provocation, they are resisting the giving of any judgment now. They did so also in the case of the vote of censure in another place. The only reason is that they consider that they have to deal with more important interests than the interest of any individual. The Government, not from any choice of their own, but owing to the course of events and the accidents of political warfare, have become responsible for the solution of great problems, full of complexity and full of difficulties, constitutional, economical, and social. In these problems the future of South Africa and its relation to this country are gravely involved. It is the honest and fervent desire of His Majesty's Government to deal with these problems with the utmost fairness and impartiality to all parties concerned.

It is the deliberate judgment of His Majesty's Government that it is impossible to discuss the Motion without entering into questions of policy and the consequences which result from that policy. I am not sure, after the speeches of the noble Lords, that we can stop at the policy of the late High Commissioner, and whether we ought not to enter also into the policy of the late Government. We consider that it is impossible for us to make an examination of these policies without the use of language which might aggravate difficulties or create new ones, and I confess I am confirmed in that belief by the speeches made to-day. At any rate, the Government must decline to be parties to any matter of the kind.

I am well aware that no words of mine can influence the course which noble Lords opposite are determined to take in regard to this Resolution. But I would appeal unto Cæsar. I would appeal to the noble Viscount himself, who two days ago spake in this House upon a matter which is part of the larger subject now before us, and spoke with evident earnestness and sincerity, using words for which I desire to take this opportunity of returning him my best thanks. He said—

> "I recognise the good will of the noble Earl, and I do not want to create difficulties for him in the great and arduous task he has to perform."

Of course, Lord Milner could not be present on this occasion. If he had been here and heard the announcement which I have had the honour to make for the Government that we regard the discussion of this Motion as likely to raise up fresh obstacles to the progress of peace and good will in South Africa, I can scarcely believe he would not have been the first to have proposed the postponement of this Resolution to a more fitting occasion. At any rate, I maintain that this course is the one which patriotism would dictate. It is well known that the Government in this House cannot command its adoption, but they can, at any rate, follow it. It was for that reason I gave notice of the Motion which stands in my name on the paper and which I now move.

Amendment moved—

"The Previous Question."—(*The Earl of Elgin*).

*EARL CAWDOR: I do not know whether one is the more surprised at the Amendment that has been moved by the noble Earl or at the speech which has accompanied it. No one for a moment doubts the noble Earl's sincerity and straightforwardness. We all recognise that to the full, but I am bound to say that I think, not alone the Amendment, but the speech must have caused many of us much surprise. We have before us a plain and distinct issue, simple enough for anyone, and capable of being answered in one of two ways with the ulmost simplicity. We are asked by the noble Viscount who has brought on this Resolution to record our appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner to the Empire and the Crown. That is a simple question, and one would think that anyone in this House could give it an answer "Aye" or "No." One would think that anyone would shrink, when such a Motion is put before them, from passing it by on the other side, from saying, in effect, it is not worth consideration, and that the great services which are recognised by everyone, and by the noble Earl himself, are matters which are of no concern to this House or to this country.

The noble Earl told us in the closing words of his speech, that the raising of this question is likely to cause difficulties in South Africa; but the noble Earl has not told us what difficulties. He has not given us an iota of reason why it should create difficulties, and he talks lightly of the policy of Lord Milner and of the policy of the late Government as if they were two different things. Where is the difference? The noble Earl shakes his head, but he did refer to the policy of Lord Milner and he said they were not prepared to discuss the policy of Lord Milner, but that they were prepared to discuss the policy of the late Government.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I did not say that.

*EARL CAWDOR: I am sorry if I misunderstood the noble Earl.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: What I meant was that we could not tell whether the policy adopted was absolutely the policy of Lord Milner or the policy of His Majesty's late Government.

*EARL CAWDOR: I do not admit for a moment that there is any shadow of suggestion as to the High Commissioner having a policy of his own opposed to the Government by which he was employed. The policy of the High Commissioner was supported by the Government at home, and is, and must be, the policy of that Government. I do not know how the noble Earl has got so puzzled, but I do suggest that this question is one that should have and is bound to have, a definite and distinct answer. The noble Earl himself answered the question a few days ago. He admitted the great value of the services of Lord Milner. He stated in this House, and he has stated again to-day, that the words he then used were just. They certainly were.

The noble Earl stated that during a time of stress and anxiety Lord Milner had served his country in a way that his country will not forget. That, my Lords, is true; but how about the memory of the noble Earl. The country will not forget it, but what about the Government? Are the Government going to-night to vote against the record of Lord Milner's services? They wish not to vote upon it at all. I can understand it. But I do not gather that the Government are likely to carry the previous question to-night, and when the previous question has been defeated what are the Government going to do? Are they going to walk out of the House? Are they going to say that this is a matter of which they have no cognisance? Are they going to vote against it or are they going to vote for it? Up to the present we have had no light on that subject. I for one cannot believe that the noble Earl, if left to himself, and if he could form his own conclusions and act absolutely by himself, would be a party, because of one slight error in a great career, to the marring and besmirching of that career as a whole.

What is the object of the noble Earl's Amendment? It is an Amendment for the purpose of giving the go-by to the Resolution and putting it aside. Its object can but be to conceal the differences that exist in the Government at the present time. [The Earl of ELGIN dissented.] The noble Earl may laugh. Is he not aware of those differences yet? There are a good many people who are, and I think the noble Earl, if he has not yet found out that there are differences, will probably find them out before he is very much older. But is it not perfectly clear? If the Government have strong views on this subject, if they are absolutely certain that there has been a grave dereliction of duty on the part of Lord Milner, why do they not say so? If that is the opinion, why do not noble Lords have the courage of their opinion? Why do they not come down to this House and explain to us what those grave derelictions of duty are, and try, if they can, to prove them to the House. Of all things I would suggest that it is not a high position to take up to try and slide off a question of this great magnitude and say they will have nothing to do with it and do not wish to express any opinion upon it at all. They will have to express an opinion upon it to-night unless they are prepared to take that most undignified position of walking out of the House when the division is taken. I hope that later on we may find out what the position of noble Lords is going to be. I thought the noble Earl the Colonial Secretary would have told us what course they were going to take on the Motion, but we have had no such light on the matter.

We have heard a great deal of the mandates which the Government have received from the country. We have one coming up one day and another coming up the next. I wonder whether anyone suggests that they are acting now upon a mandate from the country. Is there anyone on the other side of the House who will venture to say for a moment that this Amendment put before us to-day represents the deliberate view of the country at large. No, my Lords. Everyone knows that the feeling of the country is absolutely opposed to what noble Lords opposite are doing to-night. The country is always generous, always has been generous, and always will be generous to those who do its work faithfully and well. What you ask of an official, be he High Commissioner or who he may, is that he should give the best of his powers, the best of his strength, to carry out the policy of the Government he represents. That is what it is admitted Lord Milner has done. The noble Earl says there is no precedent for such a record being placed on the journals of the House. He said that it was only when matters were concluded, when the incidents were closed, that votes recording the good services of public officials were placed upon the journals of your Lordships' House. Is not Lord Milner's career as far as South Africa is concerned a closed incident? Is it doubted that Lord Milner gave the best of his life and the best of his energies to his country for his country's good? It may be that hereafter developments may come out of that policy. Noble Lords opposite may not, perchance, follow it up. They may, perchance, not maintain what Lord Milner has won for this country; but, so far as Lord Milner himself is concerned, is it doubted that the incident, to use the noble Earl's word, of his High Commissionership is at an end. It is as much at an end as is the service of the general who has conducted a successful campaign, or the naval officer who has won a great victory at sea. The noble Earl says we must have the incident closed. I do not understand the difference.

I do not admit that this is a matter of precedent. What we are asking to-night is that exactly what the noble Earl has himself admitted—the value of the services of Lord Milner—should be recorded on the journals of the House. The noble Earl says that such a course might lead to difficulties in South Africa. Perhaps some other noble Lord on the Front Bench opposite will tell us before the debate closes what those difficulties are likely to be. I think if the noble Earl would inquire in the Colonies, in South Africa itself, he would find there as strong testimony to the value of Lord Milner's services as he could find in any part of this great Empire. It was said some days ago that Lord Milner had resigned his post amidst the plaudits of the Party on this side of the House. Lord Milner resigned his position, not alone amidst the plaudits of the Party that sits on this side of the House here and in another place; he resigned his position amidst the plaudits of the British Empire. I would ask anyone who doubts it to read back the story of Lord Milner's leaving South Africa, and I would then defy him to come down to this House and tell us that Lord Milner left his office and resigned his place only, as is suggested, amidst the plaudits of his own Party. No one who wishes to testify to facts can possibly be unaware that Lord Milner's great work in South Africa is lauded and applauded, not only in this country, but in every part of our great Colonial Empire.

There is, I venture to say, one person who need not disturb himself at all with regard to the course which the Government have thought fit to take. I refer to Lord Milner himself. The Government propose, while admitting the value of his services, to decline to place them on record on the journals of your Lordships' House. It does not much matter. The value of those services, the greatness of them, is recorded already. It may be or it may not be recorded in the journals of your Lordships' House or in the records of another place, but it is recorded, and recorded for ever, in the hearts of a grateful and a thankful people. I would venture to say one thing more before I sit down, and I do trust His Majesty's Government will bear in mind this point. It is easy to hit one official, it is easy to pick out one small bit of a man's career and try and injure the whole of his career in consequence of that one act; but we have to look at something more important—important though this is so far as Lord Milner is concerned—because we have to consider it as affecting the whole of the officials of this great country abroad. I do not know that we always appreciate to the full what we owe to those who deal with our interests in foreign countries. The tact, the temper, the patience, the hard work necessary and the responsibility that they have to take are enormous. If we once let it be understood that good work, carrying out Government policy faithfully and truly for years, is to receive not even the recognition of a record, we shall, to my mind, injure seriously the future activity and responsibility of those who represent this country in other lands.

I would beg His Majesty's Government to bear this in mind, and I would, if it is not too late, again appeal to the noble Earl. I would ask him to look at the effect that this action on the part of the Government must have generally upon officials employed by us in the Colonies and other parts of the Empire. I would beg the noble Earl to follow his own good commonsense. I would beg of him to set aside the Party issues that in another place have shown pretty clearly why this matter was raised there. I would beg him to remember his own statement of the value of the services of that great Englishman whose case we are discussing to-night, and I would beg him, even at the last moment, not to cast his vote at all events against a Resolution that has been moved to place upon record a statement of services, recognised not alone on this side of the House, not alone on the opposite side, where I know they are recognised by many noble Lords, but recognised also throughout the far limits of this country and through every acre of His Majesty's Empire abroad.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I think, speaking generally, it is undesirable for the occupants of the Episcopal Bench to take part in the clash of arms which necessarily accompanies the ordinary conflict of partisan political controversy. But it is just because this matter seems to me to be one which ought to lie altogether outside such controversy that I ask to be allowed to say a few words from a totally independent standpoint. Although I agree in the conclusion of the speech of the noble Earl who has just spoken, I cannot altogether follow him in or agree with some of the arguments with which he supported it. To me the infrequency of votes of commendation or of thanks by Parliament to great public servants is a matter for which I think we ought to be very thankful. Were such votes to be frequently introduced and carried it seems to me that we should be on the verge of very grave difficulties indeed, because large conclusions might very rightly be drawn either from the passing or the non-passing of Resolutions of the sort. Therefore, had this Resolution been proposed a year ago I for one would have felt sorry that it was proposed, and would not have been prepared to vote in its support unless some strangely special reason could have been shown for it.

It is a common-place to say that in the British Empire we ought to secure the best men possible to take the great positions of pro-Consuls and Viceroys in different parts of the world, and that they should be able to rely, in the work they are doing, upon the support of those who sent them forth. Ask the statesmen now in this House; the noble Marquess who leads the House, or the noble Marquess who leads the Opposition, or the noble Earl, the Colonial Secretary, and you will find that in the fulfilment of their vast responsibility for the Government of our Indian Empire, the last thought which occurred to them was that their work should be stimulated or helped by the prospect of Parliamentary votes of thanks. On the spur of a conscientious impulse to duty, and on the assurance that those at home would support and trust them, they did their great work. It is on that support and confidence they have a right to rely, not, I think, on votes of thanks. Therefore, in the abstract I would deprecate in the strongest manner any multiplication of votes such as this.

But, my Lords, the circumstances are not so simple as that. There is a record upon the journals of Parliament in the last week which makes just all the difference. It is because of what happened in the House of Commons a week ago, not because I think that in ordinary circumstances such votes ought to be given, that I for one desire to vote cordially for the Resolution of the noble Viscount opposite.

What happened in the other House a week ago is fresh in the memories of all your Lordships. Had the Government on that occasion said what has been said to-night, that votes of this kind were on large grounds undesirable; had they, with what I should have thought would have been in the circumstances a natural courage, opposed the Resolution of censure that was proposed, accompanying that opposition with any criticism they liked of particular acts of Lord Milner during his tenure of office; or had they even gone less far, and met the Resolution by such a Motion as has now been made in this House, I should have felt that the position would then have been entirely different from that which now faces your Lordships. They did otherwise; they virtually adopted the Resolution, though they struck out the name of the man censured, and since that is the sole reference now standing on our Parliamentary Minutes to Lord Milner and his work, it seems to me that it devolves on your Lordships' House to amend the record. When a great public servant has been thus used I for one feel bound to vote for what is now proposed, greatly as I should have prefered that the proposal should never have been rendered necessary.

Looking on the work of Lord Milner as a whole, I can most readily join in voting this Resolution conveying our thanks to one who holds, as it seems to me, a splendid record even among the great men who have held high office in our dependencies and Colonies, a splendid record for the devotion, the courage, the resource, and the perseverance with which, during the long-drawn stress and strain of those anxious years, he upheld the cause that he was sent out to uphold. That is the point on which the whole thing turns. We might or might not in the abstract agree with the policy that a particular Viceroy, Governor or administrator had carried through; but if it was the policy that he was sent out to carry through, a policy, too, which he believed to be the right policy, and if, further, the people of England when appealed to at the polls supported it by overwhelming majorities, then that man ought to be supported through thick and thin, because, though he was the trusted executive officer, the ultimate responsibility rested not with him.

Lord Milner upheld the policy he was sent out to carry through with a manliness, a devotion, and a self-sacrifice that few men even in the greatest positions have shown. As to criticism of particular mistakes, which may have been made by this great Governor, and especially mistakes which he may have made with regard to the question of Chinese labour, those who are bent on misrepresenting everything may very probably misrepresent what happens to-night, if this Resolution is carried, by saying that those who voted for it were supporting every item and detail in the administration of Lord Milner, or of the Government who sent him out. I propose to vote for the noble Viscount's Resolution, but I am not one of those who would give whole-hearted support to all that has been done. That, it seems to me, is, so to speak, beside the mark. With regard to Chinese labour, I do not want to discuss that point afresh to-night, but I am one of those who from the first profoundly disliked and sharply criticised it.

Separating, if I may for the moment, the acts of the present Government from some of the speeches delivered at the election time, I have no fault to find with respect to their acts in regard to Chinese labour. I strongly desire to say, however, that that does not in the least prevent me from recording my vote with enthusiasm in favour of the Resolution expressing thanks to Lord Milner. If one is cautious and critical about the policy which one dislikes with regard to Chinese labour, very much stronger terms may be used with regard to anything like illegal flogging or illegal wrong done to labourers, be they Chinese or other labourers, in the Transvaal or elsewhere. Nothing, I think, would be less likely to meet with general condonation in England than illegal wrong done to men in that position and under such circumstances as have been described. The strength and the amazing success of England's rule over uncivilised peoples has lain in the assurance, contrasted with what is sometimes felt with regard to other nations, that the lowest in the scale of civilisation —and the Chinese are not low in that scale—might absolutely count upon respect for his rights, and upon absolute freedom from assault and cruelty.

I am one of those, then, who actively dislike the Chinese labour system as a whole, and who abhor any illegal cruelty to coloured folk of any sort. But because in the closing weeks of a great administration of eight years in South Africa, under all the most difficult circumstances by which such an administration could be surrounded—because in those closing weeks an error had been committed which has been frankly and generously admitted by the noble Viscount himself in this House, an error which was no part of his policy, but was an incidental thing which ought to be forgotten now that it has been long ago brought an end to, is it to be argued that that cancels the claim of a great man upon our gratitude for his devotion and services to the country during long and inexpressibly trying years? I do not believe for a moment that your Lordships will say anything of the sort. Yet that would be what you would do were you to leave untouched on the records of Parliament as the sole account there given of what Lord Milner had done the Resolution passed in the other House which left out his name indeed, but which stood next on record to a Resolution proposed in which his name was given.

That is a position which I feel could not stand, and, therefore, I shall vote for the noble Viscount's Resolution. I feel that this is an occasion on which one who occupies a responsible position, and holds aloof from Party politics, might appropriately say a word in the largest interests of our public servants, and in defence of a man who, whether we agree with him to the full or not, has at least proved himself to be one of the most illustrious of an illustrious line,

Lord BURGHCLERE: My Lords, if I were inclined to make a Party speech to-night, which I shall endeavour as much as possible to avoid doing, I would venture to remark that neither the most rev. Primate nor the noble Earl opposite have appreciated the point which was made by my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies. My noble friend sought to point out that in moving the Resolution which he has submitted to your Lordships to-night he did so in no sense depreciative of the services of Lord Milner in South Africa, but rather because the inevitable consequences of such a debate on the present occasion would be once more to stir up strife in these Colonies at a particular juncture when it was most imperative that strife should not be stirred up. I trust that in the few words which I shall venture to address to your Lordships this afternoon I shall say nothing calculated to inflame Party differences or revive Party disputes. I had hoped, as I believe the nation itself had hoped, after the late general election, that the angry feelings aroused by the late war in South Africa, whether with regard to its origin, its conduct, or its policy, had been laid aside for a time, and that we were as a nation united with regard to that question on one sovereign point—namely, in promoting the welfare, the pacification and the advancement of our two new Colonies in South Africa.

With regard to the Resolution moved by the noble Viscount opposite, I venture at once to say that had it been brought forward by the responsible Government of the day, after the late High Commissioner's return from South Africa, I for one would most gladly have voted for it. Nor do I believe that there is any noble Lord, to whatever Party he may belong, or to whatever section of any Party he may belong, who would have refused that recognition to a distinguished servant of the State who, at a time of great public danger, had carried out to the best of his ability the policy of the Government of the day—a policy, moreover, which had the entire confidence of both Houses of Parliament. Surely, if we quarrel with that policy, if we arraign the wisdom of the war, the conduct of the war, or its settlement, we must admit that it was the Government of the day who were responsible for Lord Milner's administration. It was the Government of the day alone who, if we disagreed with this policy, we were bound to attack. But the Government whose policy Lord Milner carried out has passed away. The Colonial Secretary who was responsible for Lord Milner's appointment and administration is no longer in power. The whole of that subject is matter of history, and we should leave it to history to award either its praise or its blame to the actors in that momentous period of our times.

If the noble Viscount's Resolution could have been dissociated from its inevitable but accidental consequences, I for my part would have certainly voted for it; but at the same time I venture to think, with all submission, that such a Resolution is not a great compliment to Lord Milner himself at this time of day. The noble Earl opposite, Earl Cawdor, thought it was absolutely necessary that a record of Lord Milner's services should be placed on the Journals of Parliament. I venture to think that that was a reflecttion upon the Government which the noble Earl himself adorned, because, if it is absolutely necessary that a record of Lord Milner's services should be placed on the Journals of Parliament, surely it was for the Government who were responsible for his appointment and for his administration to recognise his services in that direction. I think, moreover, that Lord Milner requires no whitewashing even from the most ardent of his friends. I venture also to think that a belated vote of confidence is almost as bad—I will not say quite as bad—as a belated vote of censure.

My noble friend opposite, Lord Halifax, who I am certain brought forward this Resolution from the highest motives, and without an atom of Party feeling, forgot that it was impossible to discuss these matters, as has been proved by the speeches to which we have listened to-night, without exciting in the Press and on the platform throughout the country, and, what I venture to think is worse still, in the Press and on the platform throughout the two Colonies concerned, those bitter controversies which are associated so lamentably with the late war. And, my Lords, at what a moment are these controversies about to be raised? At the very moment when my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in a position of unexampled difficulty and delicacy, is endeavouring to institute free Government in the Transvaal and in the Orange River Colony, to which we were all pledged by the Treaty of peace made after the war. If ever there was a time when we ought to hush these controversies it is surely at such a moment as this.

May I venture to put the position, as I see it, before your Lordships? Whatever my opinions might be as to the policy which led up to the war, I would do everything in my power, in view of the immediate situation in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, to prevent a discussion of these matters at the present moment. But I have not risen, as I said, to make a Party speech; I rose chiefly to make a humble suggestion to His Majesty's Government, and it is this, that they should consent, either to insert some words in their Resolution as a preamble, or that—and this is a course which I, for my part, would infinitely prefer—they should substitute for the Resolution they have submitted to the House, a Resolution in these words—

> "That this House, taking into consideration that the high services of Lord Milner have already been recognised on the proper occasion, refrains from entering, at the present juncture of South African affairs, on a debate provocative of Party strife in the two Colonies concerned."

If His Majesty's Government would accept such a Resolution, or even if they would put before their Resolution some such words as—

> "Taking into consideration the high services of Lord Milner, which have been already fully recognised on a fitting occasion,"

SEVERAL NOBLE LORDS: On what occasion?

LORD BURGHCLERE: I venture to think that such a Resolution would be more acceptable to some of their supporters than the Resolution which the noble Earl has moved to-night. If His Majesty's Government could accept such a Resolution as that, and if my noble friend opposite could also accept it, we should then avoid a division in your Lordships' House, which I am confident no one wishes to see except the extremest of extreme partisans. The issue, I venture to say, is not Lord Milner's reputation. It is an issue that he himself would, I am confident, put far beyond any personal feeling of his own. It is the issue of a good settlement and the peace of South Africa; and that end, I venture to think, will not be attained by uselessly reviving bitter controversies in the two Colonies at the very moment when peace and goodwill are most necessary and desired. But whether I agree with the exact terms of the Motion moved on behalf of His Majesty's Government, whether I approve even of the course which His Majesty's Government are about to adopt, I say at once that I will not, by voice or vote, do anything to embarrass my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his work—his all-important work, fraught with difficulties as great as any Minister has yet had to encounter—in his effort to bring about the pacification and the prosperity, not only of the two Colonies, but, perhaps, of the Empire itself. It is for that reason that, if the House goes to a division, which I for one should deeply regret, I shall follow the Secretary of State for the Colonies into the Lobby.

*VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, I was almost tempted to regret, while I was listening to the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down, that he had left the House of Commons and entered this House, because I should have liked his speech which he has just addressed to us to have been delivered in the House of Commons on a recent occasion.

LORD BURGHCLERE: I can assure my noble friend that it would have been delivered if I had been there.

*VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: I should have liked also to see some Member of the Radical Party, or some Member of the Government in the other House, use the same kind of language, or something approaching to the language used by the Colonial Secretary to-night. But how was it that no Member of the Government in the lower House adopted this attitude? Why did not the Prime Minister, with his authority over his great majority, appeal to them and put before them the consequences of the Resolution moved by Mr. Byles? Is the Government so devoid of authority in the House of Commons that they are unable to produce such an effect as the noble Lord the Colonial Secretary wishes to produce upon us? Would it not have had weight with the Party there if they had been told that the debate would arouse these passions in South Africa? The argument of the noble Earl strikes me almost as if a man who had struck another a blow were to say "Peace, peace; if you strike me back it will embitter our relations."

A blow has been struck at Lord Milner in the eyes of this country, and I believe to the indignation of the country. Still more serious, it has been struck in the eyes of those amid whom Lord Milner stands as the great representative of British influence and predominance in South Africa. The noble Lord asked whether, if Lord Milner himself had been in the House, he would not have listened to his appeal and would have said that the Resolution should be withdrawn. I know the mind of Lord Milner well enough to believe that a question of personal appreciation, of putting upon the records of this House an expression of gratitude to him, would influence him but little if he thought for a moment that a Motion put forward for that object would produce ill effects in South Africa, and that not for a moment would he have encouraged or listened to any one who wished to put down such a Motion on his behalf.

Lord Milner requires no eulogist. It is not for the purposes of eulogy that my noble friend has put down the Motion, and no one listening to his speech could believe that it was merely intended to do justice to Lord Milner and to express an opinion of his services. Why is the Motion desirable? It is on account of the effect which has already been produced in South Africa by the proceedings which have taken place in the House of Commons. It is with reference to that alone, though I for my part think there is much to be said on other grounds—for instance, the blow struck at the civil service and at those who undertake responsibilities. But for my part the predominant idea is the effect it will have in South Africa—the effect on the loyalists, on the men who have stood by us, and who will still stand by us providing that this country stands by them.

I will not say more about the services of Lord Milner. That is not the point. We know how he stood at the helm during the dangerous times; and if there had been a weak man at the helm, I ask your Lordships where would now be the position of South Africa? What would have been the position to-day in South Africa if there had not been a man prepared to take upon himself responsibility, a man whom difficulties could not conquer, whom disasters could not cow, and whom obloquy could never move? Strong men, men who can stand obloquy, men who can face difficulties, are wanted in these days; and, therefore, I do not think that we can accept what was put forward in the other House, that Lord Milner will cease to have any influence upon the policy of the country. It was said that he will not be able to deflect for one moment the policy of the day. I am not sure that Lord Milner has not already deflected to a considerable extent the policy of His Majesty's Government. I ask, too, whether the speeches he has made look like the speeches of a played out man, an extinct volcano. I think it will be found that Lord Milner will be able to take his part well enough in the future destinies of this country.

It is not for the sake of Lord Milner that it is wise that your Lordships should pass this Motion. I want it to be a message of encouragement to the loyalists of South Africa. The "racial feeling and animosities" to which the Under-Secretary referred have already been produced by the proceedings in another place. The Government have allowed the "central figure" in South Africa to be struck at by the Resolution on the journals of the House of Commons. When that has been done, are we to be told we ought not to take any notice in this House of such a proceeding? This Motion is the sequel, the unhappy sequel, of the feelings which have been aroused in South Africa. No one can read the letters which come from South Africa, or the notices which appear in the Press of South Africa on both sides, without seeing that the whole situation has been profoundly modified, and that a feeling of intense indignation has been raised on the part of the loyalists of South Africa.

Lord Milner is a personage not merely to the Transvaal, but his influence extends, of course, to the Cape and Orange River. The Cape itself is not in such a satisfactory position that any blow struck at the man who was the chief representative of British supremacy will not react on the feelings of the loyalists. There is a feeling that much that Lord Milner has done is to be reversed. Of course that has caused profound consternation among the British party in South Africa. The Government may reverse much of what Lord Milner has done, but is that not a reason why the loyalists should have a message from the House of Lords that the primary points of Lord Milner's policy will not be reversed, but will be fought to the last in the country—the policy which Lord Elgin did not wish to discuss to-night?

Was the noble Lord aware that his own subordinate in the House of Commons, Mr. Winston Churchill, has said that Lord Milner's policy was "utterly discredited." Discredited by whom? It is not discredited in this House; therefore, we were anxious to put a Motion on the Order Paper to show that it is not discredited by your Lordships. It is not discredited in South Africa, at the Cape, and the policy still holds the field with every loyalist in South Africa. They are afraid that they may lose by the policy of His Majesty's Government, that they may lose in the ballot box that which they won on the field. Look at the language which is being held now by the Boer leaders.

I do not know whether any of your Lordships have read the speech of Mr. Smuts in which he shadows forth the kind of policy which will be followed. I ask, have the loyalists in the Orange River Colony and the Cape, too, not reason to be frightened? With many of the Boers still smarting from the defeat of the war, are they not rightly anxious lest a Boer general still smarting from defeat may be installed Governor of a community in which the British are a minority? Do you not see if you have executive government entirely in the hands of the Boers what havoc they may be able to make of all the institutions which have been carefully fostered under the *régime* of Lord Milner? It is for the sake of our fellow-countrymen, and because of the blow struck at Lord Milner, that I put these matters before your Lordships.

Rightly or wrongly, the loyalists believe that British supremacy is threatened now in South Africa. That feeling is increased by the belief that a blow has been struck at the man who represents the policy of British supremacy, and they further believe, rightly or wrongly, that the Government have abandoned the man, have not stood up for the man, and are unwilling to-night to stand up for the man who represents to them that supremacy. In that abandonment I trust your Lordships' House will have no part nor lot. Your Lordships can show that the country, whom you believe you represent in this matter, is equally strongly opposed to that abandonment, and I trust that your Lordships, by a decisive majority, will send words of encouragement to those loyalists in South Africa who have stood by you, and who are deeply concerned in the proceedings of your Lordships' House to-night.

EARL ROBERTS: My Lords, I most thoroughly agree with all that the noble Viscount who initiated this debate has said as to the desirability of the Members of this House recording their high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and to the Empire. I know better, perhaps, than any one else how valuable those services were, and how much the success of the war was due to Lord Milner's wise counsel and able assistance; and I confess I am filled with amazement, not to say indignation, that a body of British gentlemen should have agreed together to pass a vote of censure on the noble Lord for an error of judgment, committed quite at the close of his eventful term of office, and after he had served his country with such conspicuous devotion and such signal success during eight most anxious years. That such a thing should be possible makes me doubt whether any of the 355 Members of the House of Commons who voted in favour of the Government Amendment to Mr. Byles's Motion—practically the same thing as if they had voted for the original Motion, so far as Lord Milner is concerned—such a thing, I say, makes me doubt whether any of them could ever have been in a position of national responsibility. For if they had, I cannot believe that they would have been a party to such an ungenerous action.

It was said, if I remember rightly, by one of the hon. Gentlemen who joined in the debate, that it was necessary to censure Lord Milner because the national honour was at stake. If that hon. Gentleman had been in South Africa as I was in 1900, he would have seen how nobly, how patriotically, Lord Milner toiled to preserve the national honour, and he would have understood how impossible it would be for such a man to do anything unworthy of his country. Few people who watched the course of events from a distance have, I think, ever realised the burden of anxiety which was borne by Lord Milner in South Africa. For many months he had foreseen that the Boer Republics were not arming themselves for nothing, and that the war, which was the inevitable result of our disasters and the mistaken peace in 1881, was bound to come in his time. To this anxiety was added the knowledge that the great majority of the people in this country did not recognise the severity of the struggle that was before them. When that struggle began it was upon the High Commissioner that the burden fell most heavily, and no one saw more clearly than he did what danger threatened the whole of our South African possessions, or worked more strenuously to ensure their safety.

Lord Milner had a task which would have weighed down most men. Not only had he enemies in the field to deal with, but—what was infinitely more trying—he had disloyalty amongst his councillors to contend against. The truth of this statement cannot be gainsaid, for facts came to my knowledge at Bloemfontein which proved beyond a doubt that this was the case. Lord Milner was in a position which required an unusual amount of tact, firmness, and discretion to bring matters to a successful conclusion. I was greatly struck throughout the time I was in South Africa by Lord Milner's unusual possession of those qualities and the quiet resolution with which he grappled with the numerous difficulties with which he was surrounded.

As I have said, these difficulties would have weighed down most men. All this is apparently forgotten, and now Lord Milner is held up to his fellow-countrymen as a person deserving to be severely censured by His Majesty's Government for an error of judgment. Is an error of judgment to be weighed in the balance against the magnificent services rendered by Lord Milner? Such a censure as was passed last week in another place is a poor and a most un-English return for such services. I venture to assert, and this assertion I make in no Party spirit, that the great majority of our fellow-countrymen in no way endorse a censure which is as severe as it is unmerited.

There is another aspect of this affair about which I must say a few words, and that is the South African aspect. It is impossible to describe the feelings of consternation, indeed of positive alarm, which exists amongst the loyal people in that country at what has been happening lately here. They fear, as some of us fear, that the many valuable lives that have been sacrificed, and the many millions of money that have been spent, will have been sacrificed and spent in vain unless Great Britain wakes up to the fact that, as matters are now trending, the balance of power will be placed in the hands of men who, as I said in this House a few weeks ago, have never concealed their feeling of disloyalty, and their determination, on the first possible opportunity, to make themselves masters of the whole of South Africa.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I do not intend to detain your Lordships with more than one or two remarks, but I desire to give a reason or two why I shall feel bound to support what seems to me the very reasonable proposition of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, viz., the previous question. I hold that the Motion of the noble Viscount, besides being in my judgment ill-advised, is very inopportune. I think it may be taken for granted that, whatever be our views as to the policy which underlies this proposal, we all recognise the great qualities of Lord Milner. Some of us recognised them before he became famous. It ought to be understood that we give him every credit as a high-minded public-spirited man with a very high sense of public duty.

But if I may venture to bring back the House to the business brought before us by the noble Viscount to-night, it is that a very special eulogium should be bestowed on Lord Milner for his work in South Africa. We cannot get away from the fact that the Motion if passed will be interpreted and understood as a very special and exceptional eulogium on the policy which Lord Milner represented. It is not merely that his friends and people generally recognise his personal merits. It is as if a proposal were made as to whether a very special person deserved to be buried in Westminster Abbey. This Motion as a matter of fact picks out Lord Milner from the great band of highly-distinguished Members of this House and of equally distinguished men outside who have served the Empire in great positions. I, for one, am not prepared to give that very exceptional eulogium, because I feel that it must of necessity carry with it a declaration that we consider that his services have been successful. Whatever may be felt in this House, there are a great many persons outside and some of us inside who, with every admiration of Lord Milner on personal grounds, are bound to say that we consider that the policy which he adopted in South Africa has been an unfortunate policy, and, in fact, a failure. That I venture to think, whatever we may say here, is the verdict of the great mass of the English people, and whatever Resolutions we may pass in this House I do not suppose that anyone is under the hallucination that our votes will alter the verdict of the English people or of the world at large. That being my feeling, I deplore that the noble Viscount should have been moved to bring forward this very inopportune Resolution, which in fact challenges criticism of the policy which Lord Milner represented. You cannot interpret it in any other way than as a challenge to criticism of that policy.

I am not going to follow some of the speakers who have preceded me in any detailed criticism, in the way either of praise or of blame; but Lord Milner himself has made one or two speeches in this House, and, as I read those speeches, they amount in effect to a confession that his policy has to no small extent failed. In the speech which he made some time ago he seemed to me, unless I misunderstood the speech, to represent the present state of South Africa as a very dangerous state, as being honeycombed with disloyalty. I do not know whether the noble Viscount who moved this Motion has that feeling, but he seemed to speak very emphatically of loyalty and disloyalty among our fellow subjects in South Africa. I wonder if that represents the feeling of Lord Milner and his friends about the result of the policy of the last eight or ten years in South Africa. All plain people will say that it amounts to a confession of failure. If so, is the moment opportune to put on the records of this House a very special eulogium of the man who represented that policy? We might indeed ask, is this the happy country which in 1900 or thereabouts we were promised to have in South Africa? If this kind of feeling about the prevalence of disloyalty in South Africa represents the fact, we are to suppose that the country is really honeycombed with dissatisfaction and disloyalty. Anyhow, we are asked to believe that our Dutch and African fellow subjects are moved by a spirit of disloyalty. Now, my Lords, I beg to dispute that. But if it is so, what a *damnosa hereditas* has been left to his Majesty's Government. Is that a reason for placing a special eulogium on the records of this House? No, my Lords. But we hope and believe that it is not really a new Ireland that has been established in South Africa.

I think it is important that we should distinguish a great deal more than we sometimes do before we use these terms of loyalty and disloyalty. No doubt there must be a great deal of bitterness in South Africa. Any child could tell you that if you sow such a crop of dragons' teeth as has been sown in South Africa, you must expect a crop after its kind. It is impossible that after such a war as the Boer War there should not be much bitterness in the country. Desolated households, and all the graves, and all the misery, to say nothing of the National Scouts and the rest—what can they produce but bitterness? And that is the result of your policy. But let us distinguish in regard to this bitterness. These men, as I understand it—and I have some information—are bitter, but it is against the authors of the policy that they are bitter and not against the English people or His Majesty's Government or the Crown, and all this bitterness involves no disloyalty to the Empire and the Crown. My belief is that many of these Dutchmen who are being branded as disloyal are as loyal as any Members of this House, and it is in that belief that I hold to the hope that His Majesty's Government, if allowed a fair field in a policy of conciliation and goodwill, will, in no long period, turn this so-called Ireland in South Africa into a new Canada—a Canada as prosperous, as happy, and as loyal as the Canada of to-day. Personally I have a good hope that I shall live to see that happy consummation.

In conclusion I would say only this: To all those who rise above the atmosphere of Party prejudice and consider the matter in an impartial way, and who really desire patriotically to serve the present needs and interests of the Empire, the Motion that we should pass "the previous question" should appeal, because to-day, as hitherto, the great need of South Africa is peace. It is seven or eight years ago that a famous soldier was reported to have said in memorable words that what the country needed—and he knew South Africa—was peace and not a surgical operation. My Lords, South Africa has had its surgical operation, and its need of peace to-day is greater than ever. I sincerely hope, though against hope, that all those who desire to have a personal share in bringing about that happy consummation which we describe as turning distracted South Africa into a new Canada will take their part in this good work of conciliation by voting for the previous question to-night, because they may be well assured that if they send that decision under present circumstances to South Africa it will be a message of peace.

*Lord HARRIS: I did not intend to address your Lordships to-night, but I really cannot allow the speech which the right rev. Prelate has just addressed to your Lordships to pass without some comment. I can hardly believe that it is a speech made by one who claims to have a pride in our Empire, in our system of justice to the people whom we govern, and in our system of sympathetic administration of the native races who are under our control. The right rev. Prelate deems it inadvisable that there should be placed upon the records of Parliament an appreciation of Lord Milner's services. I assume that the right rev. Prelate would like to be left upon the records of Parliament the Resolution passed in the other House—a Resolution amended, it is true, from what was moved by the private Member, but which bears upon the face of it the opinion of the Government that they are not prepared to express any appreciation of the services of Lord Milner. Then the right rev. Prelate says that he thinks the Motion is inopportune—inopportune that a Resolution such as that proposed by the noble Viscount should be placed upon the records of Parliament. Inopportune? Does the right rev. Prelate claim to speak for South Africa? Does he claim to represent the opinions of the loyalists of South Africa, or of whom? Does he ignore what Lord Milner did there? Does he not recognise what Lord Milner had to do—that apart from any question of such duties as he had to discharge in connection with the war, he had to create a just Government—a Government that should administer justice between Boer and British alike; that he should do more than that—that he should lay down and encourage those feelings of sympathy without which South Africa indeed is likely to be seriously distraught? I venture to say that there is no man who is serving in South Africa or who has served there for many years past who has done more to instil into the minds and the comprehension of the Boers the necessity for justice and sympathy to the native races, or who has done more to bring into harmony the somewhat conflicting views of British and Boer, than has Lord Milner himself. It is upon these grounds that I consider the noble Viscount was perfectly justified, having regard to what took place in another place, in endeavouring to persuade your Lordships to express your opinion upon what Lord Milner has done.

I must confess that I am surprised that my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has not been able to influence his colleagues on this point. The noble Earl has filled the most responsible post in the officialdom of the British Empire. Upon what grounds do the Government refuse this meed of gratitude to a man who perhaps has passed through a more serious and anxious time than anyone in the list of our greatest Pro-Consuls since the days of Lord Canning? By what are they actuated? Is it that they are unable to recognise the great services that Lord Milner has performed? That I cannot believe. Judging from the speeches that were made three or four weeks ago, and from what was said in another place the other day, I think I am justified in believing that the ground-work of their refusal to recognise Lord Milner's great services is the one slip which he made towards the end of his administration. I want to ask the noble Earl this Question. Can he say that Lord Milner did not do justice? He may have acted illegally; he has accepted the responsibility in the most honourable and courageous way. Can the noble Earl say that he did injustice? That, after all, is the thing which should guide us most. The noble Earl knows as well as I do that Viceroys and Governors in India have to do things which are not regulated by law, and what they have to consider very anxiously and with great study is: Am I doing justice in this matter? The noble Earl, in his experience in India, must oftentimes have been anxious on questions of this kind, and on every occasion when he has risen from his task I am perfectly certain that he has been able to say conscientiously, "If I have acted without lawful right, it is only after the most careful study of the question; but I believe I have done justice." Can he not now feel with regard to Lord Milner that if he did make one false step at the end of a most trying time, at any rate he did not do an injustice? I believe that Lord Milner's career in South Africa, apart altogether from the fact of his consolidating our rule there, is distinguished and will be marked in the pages of history by this which the right rev. Prelate is unable to recognise—that during those latter years at the end of the war, when he was forming a Government, he did by his personal influence, by his sense of justice, and by his anxiety to strengthen South Africa commercially, very successfully ameliorate the feelings which had been aroused between Boer and British by the war, and that he did very largely succeed in bringing the two races together. It is upon this ground more than upon any other that I shall with the greatest cordiality support the Motion of the noble Viscount.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: My Lords, I cannot help remarking a peculiarity which has characterised this debate. Setting aside all technical phrases, this is a debate intended by those who promoted it to be a testimonial to Lord Milner's reputation, and I feel very great doubt as to what is the sort of feeling which prevails on the other side of the House with reference to the mode in which the Motion ought to be met. Beyond the small technicality—I am afraid I must so describe it—that there is no precedent for moving a vote of confidence or a testimonial for high services until the "incident" —whatever that may mean—is concluded, I have noticed a very remarkable state of things. Whereas it is supposed that something that Lord Milner has done—what it was we will see presently—has deprived him of the confidence of his fellow-countrymen and ought to prevent either this or the other House of Parliament from testifying their gratitude for the services which it is not denied he has rendered to the State, nobody has discussed what that "something" is. There has been a remarkable abstinence from discussing the thing itself in order to see the extent, degree, and nature of the act which it is supposed has deprived Lord Milner of the just reward of some of the great services he has rendered. It is a remarkable condition of things. Might I, as a retort, ask what precedent there is for censuring a man, unless he has been guilty of a grave dereliction of public duty, when he has undoubtedly, and by the confession of some of those who bring the accusation against him, rendered great services to the country and been one of the most remarkable Pro-Consuls the Empire has ever had? What is this thing which has prevented the just appreciation of Lord Milner's services by the public recognition of the State? Nobody has discussed it, and the reticence of noble Lords opposite on the subject is very remarkable.

I notice also a somewhat remarkable reluctance on the other side of the House to express their views. We have had an abundance of speakers ready and willing to bear their testimony to the reputation and the great services rendered to the State by Lord Milner, but on the other side there has been the greatest reticence on the subject. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, as everyone who knows him would expect, has, like a frank and honourable gentleman, recognised those services in a manner we all appreciate. But what then? Why are we not to thank Lord Milner for those services? The right rev. Prelate has given the reason that we ought not to make such a tribute too common, that if it were made too common it might occasionally be abused. I recognise the value, greater or less, of that observation. But consider what, in fact, has happened. We are not arguing on the artificial hypothesis of people getting up a testimonial or what not *apropos* of nothing. As the most rev. Primate truly said, the situation is absolutely changed by what was done in another place. That is what has rendered it necessary and proper for us to bring forward our view. We could not be prevented by small observation of precedents, or their absence, from doing justice to a great man who has been grievously injured by calumny as well as by other modes of attack during his period of office. I am bound to say that I am very much surprised—I will not say disappointed—by the speech of the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Hereford. The right rev. Prelate, I remember, expressed his great regret in a speech in June, 1904, that Lord Milner was not then present. He gave two reasons.

One reason was that if Lord Milner were here he could not do so much mischief as he was then doing in South Africa. That is a matter of opinion, and the right rev. Prelate is entitled to his view. But he went on to say that the other reason he wished Lord Milner was here was that he did not like attacking a public man in his absence. A noble sentiment! Whether the right rev. Prelate adhered to it is another matter. But he said that if Lord Milner had been here he would have spoken out his mind. Here was the opportunity to-night. Lord Milner's character and conduct are in debate, and Lord Milner is here in this country and is able to answer for himself.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: The noble Earl will excuse me, but I never attacked Lord Milner's character.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I think that one of the things that the right rev. Prelate attributed to Lord Milner was impetuosity and inconsiderateness of language.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: Some of his language certainly.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I think the right rev. Prelate has forgotten what he said. I have the report here. I notice in particular that he has made himself a party to one of the common cries against Lord Milner and his policy—namely, that he was doing the will of the gold speculators. The great question, he said, was whether or not human lives or gold would be the more valuable, and I am afraid that the right rev. Prelate suggested that in Lord Milner's view gold was the more valuable article of the two. The right rev. Prelate said in this House on March 21, 1904—

> "Before we examine the Ordinance, may I take the liberty, as a good many of your Lordships seem to support that view, of pausing for a moment to look at Lord Milner's own language? I do it with reluctance because Lord Milner is not here, and I do not much like speaking even of a public man in his position in his absence. I very much wish he were here, and for two reasons. In the first place, I could have spoken my mind more freely in his presence; and in the second place, he would be comparatively harmless on these benches. He would be out of South Africa. I am only expressing the sentiments of a vast number of thoughtful Englishmen when I say that it would be a great boon to South Africa if Lord Milner was no longer there."

May I ask the right rev. Prelate why he has not spoken out to-night? He had the opportunity, it was relevant to the subject; why, then, has he not spoken out? I do not pause for a reply, but I have my own views.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: Perhaps the noble Earl will furnish us with those views.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I will quote the right rev. Prelate again. He said—

> "This (the South African Ordinance) is prepared on the principle that the value of the lives of these men is less than that of a better dividend for some of the low grade mines. That is the way in which it presents itself to a plain mind looking at the moral aspect of the question."

Is that or is that not an insinuation against Lord Milner?

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: That was a description of the Ordinance.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Certainly, as part of Lord Milner's policy, and as applicable to Lord Milner's conduct. Then again—

> "The mine-owners and the dividends are the things to be considered."

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: If the noble Earl quotes me he should in justice read the context.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Does the right rev. Prelate mean, or does he not mean, that Lord Milner in the course of his policy was actuated by the influence of the mineowners? I ask for a reply.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: I mean exactly what my speech said, and I am prepared to repudiate any unjustifiable inferences which the noble and learned Earl may draw from it.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: That depends on what the right rev. Prelate says is an unjustifiable inference. I admit that the question of Lord Milner's fitness or otherwise for his office may be a matter of personal feeling, as to which the right rev. Prelate may have his opinion; he may think Lord Milner was perfectly unfit for his office, and, indeed, he says so, but I have not referred to that question at all. That is a matter on which we also have our opinion, and I am content to leave it to your Lordships. But what I want to ask the right rev. Prelate is what he meant when he spoke of greater dividends being of more value than men's lives and of the influence of the people who owned the mines, and associated these things with Lord Milner's government, if he did not mean the insinuation that Lord Milner was influenced by persons who were interested in the mines, and not by the interests of his country? I am indisposed to treat this personal question any longer, but I cannot forbear saying that after that speech, and after the expression of the desire that Lord Milner should be here to answer what he said, we have had to-night from the right rev. Prelate a speech as mild as any sucking dove, declaring that it is a question of the degree to which Lord Milner's policy should be approved.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: The noble Earl forgets how changed are the circumstances now. Lord Milner no longer holds his former position, and his policy is a thing of the past.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Certain words have reached me, but how they are a reply to what I have said I am wholly unable to understand.

With regard to the general question, it appears to me that one of the most serious things that can be done in this country is to discredit a great public servant after his great public services in the way it has been sought to do it in this case. The method by which the attempt was met seems to me to make the matter worse. Nothing could have been easier than for the Government to say "We resist this Motion. This incident—(I use the noble Earl's word)—is closed." Here is a man who has rendered great public services; he has done what we all admit to have been greatly for the benefit of the State. ["No."] Yes—in various parts of the world. I am not speaking of this particular incident at all; I am speaking of the man who has been a great public servant, and, by the admission of all, has rendered services of great benefit in various parts of the world. You say that in one particular instance he has been guilty of an irregularity. Whether he has or has not is one of the grotesque parts of the story that we are discussing. Nobody knows whether he did or did not commit the irregularity. It is said that Mr. Evans had a conversation with Lord Milner, in the course of which he suggested that he should give some slight corporal punishment in order to avoid bringing before the courts of justice cases of a trifling character. Lord Milner, with a chivalry peculiar, I think, to himself, says—and no one will doubt his word—that he does not remember any such conversation—it is not unimportant to notice this point, because it shows the trifling nature of the matter—but, knowing that the gentleman was a gentleman of high honour and greatly to be respected he says the conversation must have taken place, and he takes full responsibility for it. That is the whole story, and out of that has grown this tremendous indictment of Lord Milner.

We cannot help feeling that there is an air of unreality about the whole business. That is not the real reason why the Govment refuse to recognise Lord Milner's merits. Indeed, I think the observations of the right rev. Prelate to which I have referred took place before that incident could have occurred. The real accusation—and why should we not deal with it?—is that Lord Milner is supposed to have made himself the mere instrument and tool of the persons engaged in the gold-mining industry. That is the accusation against him, but no one has dared to bring forward one atom of evidence in support of such a suggestion. The Party opposite have tried as far as they can to discredit a great and noble and most useful public servant, and we, at all events, will do as much as we can to prevent the effect of that being in South Africa what it certainly will be if it is not in some way or another counteracted.

And what is the answer of the Government? "We would rather not vote upon it at all." That is not the conduct of a Government, I should have thought.

If Lord Milner is guilty of the charges which have been suggested against him, impeach him; if he is not guilty, recognise his public services. But this half-hearted method of evading responsibility, of saying they will not condemn him and they will not agree with us in putting him where he ought to have been before without this—well, one does not like to use strong language, and I will not follow the episcopal example, but one does feel very angry that when a man has been devoting the best years of his life, through periods of strain and difficulty and danger which it is easy enough for us to speak lightly of here, but which nobody can appreciate who has not been through them themselves, he should then be treated as Lord Milner has been. Therefore it is that I am delighted, so far as I am concerned, and to the extent to which any words of mine can carry weight, to have an opportunity of expressing my admiration and respect for the noble and distinguished man whom the House of Commons has sought to degrade.

LORD GRIMTHORPE: My Lords, I think that in listening to the speeches which have been delivered in support of this Motion it must have occurred to many of your Lordships that those speeches would perhaps have been better delivered in another place and on another occasion. They were speeches which might more appropriately have been addressed to the House of Commons in answer to the vote of censure moved by an independent Member of that House upon Lord Milner. The speeches from the other side have seemed to be directed towards an imaginary Motion. They sound as if the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies had himself moved a vote of censure upon Lord Milner, and that noble Lords opposite were concerned to answer that vote of censure. But nothing of the kind has taken place. I quite agree that the vote of censure in the House of Commons by an irresponsible Member of that House was an unfortunate Motion; I think it would have been better met in the other House by moving the "previous question" as the present Motion is now being met here, and I also think it would have been better answered by the representative of the Government if it had been answered in the same spirit and in the same language as has been employed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to-night. Nobody can for a moment contend—I do not think that any noble Lord opposite has contended—that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has done any injustice to Lord Milner in anything he has said. I am sure there was not one word in his speech to justify the contention of the late Lord Chancellor that he wished to discredit a distinguished public servant.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: I never suggested it of the noble Earl; I do not think he will suggest it himself.

LORD GRIMTHORPE: I am quite sure he will not; he never dreamt of suggesting such a thing. But the late Lord Chancellor attacked the Government because in his opinion it was their desire to discredit a distinguished public servant. If he thinks it was not their desire to discredit a distinguished public servant, then this Motion is to a great extent answered. We are delighted to have that tribute from the late Lord Chancellor that the Government has no wish to discredit a distinguished public servant; it is a valuable admission on his part.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: The noble Lord is inverting what I said. I said that their desire was to evade responsibility.

LORD GRIMTHORPE: I took down these words—"to discredit a distinguished public servant." I think the Colonial Secretary took up a sound position when he deprecated the course now being taken by this House. He said that it was an unprecedented course. But the late Lord Chancellor threw ridicule upon that, and suggested that whether the Motion was according to precedent or not was a small technicality. It is somewhat remarkable to hear from a Tory Lord Chancellor that when the House of Lords disregards precedent it is a small technicality; it shows that on his part he is consumed by a desire to protect Lord Milner from the slightest breath of public disapproval, and in comparison with that anything else is a comparatively trifling matter.

But what is the position that this House is really taking up? Behind the Motion on the Paper there is another Motion. It is not only a Motion of confidence in Lord Milner, it is a Motion of censure upon the House of Commons. That is the real wish and intention of those who have moved and supported this Motion on the other side—to pass a vote of censure upon the House of Commons, because an irresponsible Member of that House wished to pass a vote of censure upon Lord Milner. I cannot think that that is a sound constitutional position for the House of Lords to take up. It is true that that hon. Member took a totally unusual course, and perhaps it was not met by the Government in the happiest possible way; but the fact that an unusual course was taken in another place is no reason at all why this House also should take an unusual course and follow suit. That is certainly what they have done by bringing in this Motion to-night. Have noble Lords really considered the language of the Motion moved by Mr. Byles in the House of Commons? That Motion was devoted to the censure of a particular act on the part of Lord Milner. Is it your wish to uphold that particular act? Personally speaking, it seems to me that this question of flogging has been dealt with with a considerable amount of unnecessary unction. It has been argued as if flogging was a thing unknown in this country, which is rather remarkable when we remember that up to a comparatively recent period flogging was permitted in the Army and in the Navy. Moreover, if noble Lords have been to China or know anything about the Chinese they will understand that the Chinese regard flogging with much the same levity and indifference as Members of your Lordships' House used to regard flogging when they were undergoing a course of instruction at Eton. Therefore, it seems to me that when a bitter and envenomed opponent of Lord Milner casts his eye over his career as Pro-Consul in South Africa, and singles out the flogging of a Chinaman as the one act to which he can take exception throughout that career, he is really posing as an extreme admirer and eulogist of Lord Milner, and he can hardly pay a higher tribute to his administration.

Consequently, I say it is absurd to make so much of the Resolution which was moved in the House of Commons. It is absurd that because a Gentleman in the House of Commons proposed a Motion of that kind, this House should neglect all precedent and take this matter as seriously as it has done, and go out of its way to pass a Resolution commending the services of Lord Milner as a public servant. The Colonial Secretary said that Lord Milner perhaps would wish that this debate should not take place. In some respects no doubt he would, but I think that any man would be proud to receive such a tribute as Lord Milner has received from Viscount Goschen and Earl Roberts—a tribute which everybody will agree was thoroughly deserved. But this tribute having been paid to Lord Milner in the most emphatic way by his friends and admirers, I think the House would much better consult its dignity to leave the matter there.

If, however, you are not content to leave it there, we must ask what it is you wish to express your high appreciation of in the character and career of Lord Milner. The late Lord Chancellor said that Lord Milner's character and conduct were in question. I do not think that his character and conduct are in question at all in this Motion. The words are—

> "That this House desires to place on record its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire."

That means the political services rendered by Lord Milner to the Crown and the Empire. It can have no other meaning. Services rendered to the Crown and the Empire are political services. It is perfectly obvious from all the speeches which have been delivered in support of Lord Milner that it is not his character and conduct that are in question. Every noble Lord opposite knows perfectly well that no noble Lord on this side wishes to question Lord Milner's character or conduct for one moment. It is his political services to the Crown and Empire that noble Lords opposite wish to endorse, uphold, and commend. [Several noble LORDS: Hear, hear.] Exactly; but how can you expect noble Lords on this side to join in voting for a Motion commending the political services of Lord Milner—services which he rendered in his capacity as a servant of the late Government, under the instructions of the late Colonial Secretary? It is a political Motion. Noble Lords opposite do not wish to rehabilitate the character of Lord Milner as a man; they wish to pass a vote of confidence in the late Government and in the administration of the late Government in South Africa. That is what is at the bottom of the matter, and it shows that there is a double motive in this Motion. Noble Lords wish to pass a vote of censure on the House of Commons on the one hand, and, on the other, a vote of confidence in the late Government for its policy in South Africa. [A noble LORD: Not at all.] That is the noble Lord's opinion; I am afraid I cannot agree with him. Then, my Lord, Lord Goschen said that until this Motion was passed the loyalists of South Africa would be discouraged and angered; but, it seems to me that this Motion will not make much difference in the feeling of the loyalists of South Africa. Will this Motion make them less loyal? It will certainly stir up the embers of political controversy. It is perfectly well known that noble Lords on the other side, with very good reason from their point of view, uphold Lord Milner, agree with his policy, would like to see that policy continued, and when they are in a position to carry it out, they would probably wish to see Lord Milner in the same position, carrying out the same policy. That is well known by the loyalists of South Africa, they do not require to be told so by a Motion in this House; therefore, I say, with all due deference, that no good purpose can really be served by a Motion of this kind, and, if I may be allowed to say so, I think the House of Lords would have more considered its dignity if it had treated the Motion proposed in the House of Commons with the contempt that noble Lords opposite say it deserved rather than have gone out of its way to create a new precedent by passing a vote of appreciation of Lord Milner's services in South Africa.

If you pass this Motion in the case of Lord Milner, where are you going to stop? I would like to ask noble Lords opposite this question. Suppose noble Lords on this side were to move a vote of appreciation of the services of Lord Curzon in India, basing that Motion particularly on his political services, and saying that they wished to pass that vote of appreciation of the services of Lord Curzon in India because he resisted the attempt to exalt the military at the expense of the civil side of the administration of India. Many noble Lords opposite, while greatly admiring Lord Curzon's conduct and character, would not feel themselves at liberty to vote for such a Motion. In the same way, noble Lords on this side, while appreciating Lord Milner's character and conduct to the same extent as noble Lords opposite would appreciate the character and conduct of Lord Curzon, do not feel themselves at liberty to support the Motion of the noble Viscount but would rather vote for the previous question.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I confess that after hearing the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down, I am utterly at a loss to understand what line he is going to take in the division shortly to be taken. He seems to have censured his friends and not supported his opponents. He apparently desires to maintain Lord Milner in the position which I venture to say he holds in the opinion of the world at large, and, at the same time, to censure him. When I saw on the Paper the Motion of my noble friend Viscount Halifax, I thought it would be an opportunity for Members of your Lordships' House, no matter how much they might differ on one or two subjects concerning the career of Lord Milner, to pass unanimously a vote of appreciation of the manner in which he discharged the responsible duties of High Commissioner in South Africa. When I saw the Amendment of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I could not conceive why such an Amendment was necessary. I deprecate on various grounds the course the noble Earl has taken. It would have been more graceful to a great official to have voted him in your Lordships' House this Motion of confidence which I think he deserves. I deprecate it still more because I am anxious to interrogate the noble Earl on matters connected with the Colonial Office, and he is now precluded from answering any questions which may be put.

The attack—for I can call it nothing else—upon Lord Milner in the House of Commons by the representative of the noble Earl opposite must mean one of two things. Either the Under-Secretary spoke for himself only or he spoke for the noble Earl the Secretary of State. If he spoke for himself, then to my mind the Under-Secretary repudiated the words used by the noble Earl which have been quoted to-night—generous words as they have been called—to the effect that during a time of special anxiety Lord Milner showed a courage and devotion which this country will not forget. How were those words endorsed by the mouthpiece of the noble Earl opposite? To my mind, the words of the Under-Secretary conveyed to your Lordships' and to the country at large a totally different idea from that conveyed by the words of the noble Earl himself. It is a remarkable fact that in the course of the debate on the Amendment moved by the Under-Secretary not a single Cabinet Minister got up either to repudiate or to affirm the attack made on Lord Milner. Consequently I cannot help thinking that the noble Earl opposite to a certain extent has repudiated his own views as expressed in your Lordships' House. I believe I am correct in saying that that speech of the Under-Secretary was made under the instructions of the Prime Minister.

What was the statement made by the Under-Secretary of State? The Under-Secretary has had considerable experience of South Africa; he has written books and made speeches on the subject; and I find some difficulty in reconciling his attack upon Lord Milner, if he spoke the mind of the noble Earl and of the Cabinet, with his statement made in 1901 that—

> "During the past eighteen months there had been calumny directed against Sir A. Milner. Every variety of falsehood, slander, and misrepresentation which the disturbed imagination of rebels, traitors, and pro-Boers could invent had been directed against this able man. What had Sir A. Milner's work been? He said without limitation that on no public servant for many years had the British Empire devolved a heavier or harder task than on Sir A. Milner."

How can the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies reconcile that statement with the impeachment—for it is nothing else—that he made on behalf of the Government of this able and efficient civil servant? Let us go back to the career of Lord Milner in South Africa. Your Lordships know full well that for the first two years of his career in South Africa Lord Milner devoted himself in silence to studying and diagnosing the condition of things in that country. He was not idle. If your Lordships will study the Blue-books you will find that he was constantly sending to the Colonial Office Reports on the condition of affairs in South Africa. It will also be remembered that after a period of hard work he came home for a short holiday, and during the period of his stay in this country there took place what is known as the Edgar incident. I need not recapitulate the details of the Edgar incident; it is sufficient to say that after that time the entire situation in South Africa was changed. Matters were, if I may use the expression, brought to a head. On his return to South Africa Lord Milner realised the change which had occurred in the political situation of the country, and in May he sent home the famous despatch in which he declared that it was urgently necessary that some change should take place in the arrangements of that country. Shortly after that there was held the Bloemfontein Conference of which Lord Milner sent home full details. It has been said that after that Lord Milner could have prevented war in South Africa. I agree—but how? It would have been possible for Lord Milner to have prevented war by surrendering every British right, by going back to the policy of 1881, which, in my opinion, was wholly responsible for the late war. If he had surrendered those rights, as no Englishman anxious to maintain the honour and prestige of his country would have done, we should have been in exactly the same position as in 1881. I say nothing in regard to the surrender of 1881; in all probability it is fully in the mind of your Lordships. Lord Milner would have been unworthy of the position he occupied if he had permitted the country to be placed in the ignominious position which it occupied in 1881. Undoubtedly, from that time Lord Milner had an exceedingly trying experience, such an experience as would have caused any man without ability, without nerve, and without tact, to lose his head. As Viscount Goschen has said, if a weak man had been in Lord Milner's position, the situation in South Africa at the present moment would not be what it is. That view is endorsed not only by myself as an admirer of Lord Milner, but by no less a person than the man who habitually attacks Lord Milner in the House of Commons, acting as the mouthpiece of the Colonial Secretary. What was the opinion of the Under-Secretary when he was—well, I will not say what he was at that time; I do not know what he is now. But what was the opinion of the present Under-Secretary when in South Africa, guaging the difficulties of the position, and realising that Lord Milner was the one man who never lost his head? This is recorded in Mr. Churchill's book, and relates to the year 1900—

> "Only at Government House did I find a man without illusions—"

that is Lord Milner, the man he now denounces—

> "the cautious and unwearied Pro-Consul—"

that is Lord Milner—

> "understanding the faults and virtues of both sides, measuring the balance of rights and wrongs, and determined—more determined than ever, for it is the only hope for the future of South Africa—to use his knowledge and his power to strengthen the Imperial ties."

This, my Lords, is the man whom the noble Earl refuses to defend, and concerning whom, as far as I can gather, he endorses the remarks of his subordinate in the House of Commons. I am not one of those who defend the consistency of the Under-Secretary. I do not think that consistency can be found in a man who, after a very short experience of the House of Commons, changes from one side to the other. He may be right or he may be wrong, but he cannot be considered a consistent politician. What I want to ask is this. Do the Government or do they not endorse the statement of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies? I do not accuse the Under-Secretary of inconsistency—it is so apparent; but there is one statement in his speech of March 21st which I should like to ask whether the Government endorse. These are the words—

> ". . . . the ideals, the principles, the policies for which he has toiled utterly discredited by the people of Great Britain."

What were those ideals, and what was that policy? The policy was the restoration of the British flag and British peace in South Africa; the ideal a British South Africa. Is Lord Milner to be discredited because those are his ideals and his principles? I demand an answer from whoever may speak on behalf of the Government. Is Lord Milner, on account of holding these great, and, to my mind, glorious ideals and principles, to be told that he is discredited by the English people? I venture to say that he is not discredited. Noble Lords opposite may say that he is discredited by the result of the recent general election. I deny it entirely. The last general election was not fought on Lord Milner's ideals and principles. It is quite possible that a certain section of the community, who cried loudest for the war, now that the war is over regret having to pay the cost, but the election has not discredited Lord Milner's attitude in South Africa. The election of 1900 was undoubtedly fought on the question of the South African War. There are a certain small minority, including the noble learned Lord on the Woolsack, who have always deprecated that war, but I do not think that even the noble and learned Lord will say that the people of England who denounced the war were not comparatively few.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): They were very few then; they are a vast multitude now.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: With all respect, I venture to differ entirely. If the recent general election had been fought on the question of South Africa, pure and simple, I believe the same people would have come to the front as came to the front in 1900. The result of the recent election was due to misrepresentation regarding South

Africa. I will not lower the tone of the debate by dealing with the cartoons and misrepresentations that were put forward; I will merely say that, but for those cartoons and misrepresentations, the truth in regard to which is slowly finding its way into the minds of the English people, noble Lords opposite would probably have been sitting on this side of the House and we on that. But I will not sink to that question; the misrepresentations will recoil on the heads of those who made them.

Let me deal with the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards Lord Milner. In moving his Amendment, the Under-Secretary declared himself to be acting under the instructions of the Prime Minister. A more extraordinary Amendment was never introduced to the House of Commons by a responsible member of the Government. It was, if I may use the expression, a subterfuge. It would have been far more straightforward for the Government to have supported Mr. Byles' Motion than to have attacked a great public servant anonymously. What were the objects of the Amendment? It appeared to attack the whole political policy of a great public servant on one single point—the question of flogging. That policy was declared to be an exceptional policy, but I venture to say it is the policy of the country at the present time. The question of flogging was made the peg on which to hang an attack upon his whole policy. If there is one man in this country who would have objected to any brutal or cruel course it is Lord Milner. His character was well known in South Africa; he was regarded as one of the most humane and kind hearted men who ever entered the country; in fact, I believe I am correct in saying that his humanity, his dislike of cruelty of any sort to the native races, did not secure unanimous approval from some of the people in that country. But Lord Milner never flinched from the humane course he had always set before him. I was reading only the other day a speech delivered by Lord Milner shortly before he left that country in which he said—

> "With regard to the native question, or rather I should say the colour question, you know I am in the opinion of the vast majority of men in this room a heretic, and I am an impenitent heretic."

The Marquess of Londonderry.

Is it likely that such a man would be guilty of cruelty? All I can say is that when it is known in South Africa, by people who have followed Lord Milner's career and know his humanity, that the House of Commons has passed a Resolution denouncing him for inhumanity, the opinion of the House of Commons will be considered as nothing. Therefore, I hope your Lordships on this occasion will ratify the opinion of Lord Milner's humanity which is held in South Africa, by agreeing to this Resolution, if not unanimously, at any rate by an overwhelming majority. Is the censure justified or merited? I say it is not. In the recent debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Chamberlain said—

> "Lord Milner says, and no doubt everyone will believe his statement, that he has absolutely no recollection of this conversation, but he has no reason whatever to doubt Mr. Evans' integrity or his memory, and therefore he has taken it on himself to accept his statement as accurate."

What is Lord Milner's position in this matter? No Member of your Lordships' House will deny the chivalry and loyalty of Lord Milner. He has occupied a great place in public opinion. What have the great leading officials to depend upon, but the support of their civil servants? I have myself the highest opinion of the Civil Service. I have been privileged to occupy the post of Viceroy of Ireland, and I have filled other positions in which a great number of people have looked to me for support, as they look to the head of every department for support, and they have never looked in vain. I have never spoken to Lord Milner since he returned to this country; I have had no communication with him direct or indirect. But is it entirely beyond the bounds of probability that Lord Milner has taken upon himself something for which he had no moral responsibility whatever? If that is the case, I say that to attack Lord Milner for one detail of his policy for which he was not morally responsible, and to condemn him as the House of Commons has done, is to act absolutely unwarrantably according to the notions of any Englishman.

What do our civil servants depend upon? They depend upon the assurance that the chief is loyal to them and they are loyal to their chief, and I cannot help thinking that if you pass this vote of censure on a great civil servant you will be striking a blow at a Civil Service which is without equal in any part of the world, and attacking them in a manner to which they cannot respond. Under these circumstances I gladly endorse the Motion of my noble friend Viscount Halifax, because I think it does simple justice to a great public servant; I endorse it also because it will show the people of South Africa that we realise what Lord Milner has done for them; and I further endorse it on behalf of the Civil Service to which this country owes so much and without whose loyalty, devotion, and energy we should not enjoy our present position of happiness and prosperity.

*LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, by bringing in this Motion the noble Viscount throws down the gauntlet to the Party to which he is opposed, and he asks us on these benches practically to approve of all that Lord Milner has said and done in South Africa. If the Motion were to the effect that this House recognised that Lord Milner had scorned delights and lived laborious days in the service of his country, or if it emphasised the opinion that Lord Milner throughout was actuated by patriotic motives, I do not suppose there is a single Member of this House on either side who would withhold assent from such a Resolution. Or if it went on to asseverate that Lord Milner was a humane man, as the noble Marquess suggests, who in the world would be found to assert the contrary? But the seconder of the Motion and the noble Earl who was lately at the head of the Admiralty have told us perfectly plainly what the object of this Motion is. It is no doubt partly to pass a vote of confidence in the integrity, the labour, the energy, and the patriotism of Lord Milner. But it goes beyond that. It asks this House to assert that it agrees with Lord Milner's policy, and if we are asked to agree with the policy of Lord Milner we are asked to agree with the policy of the Government of which Lord Milner was the representative. The noble Lord who seconded the Motion spoke at large about its being necessary for this House to express the settled opinion of the country upon Lord Milner. This is not the tribunal to express such an opinion. There is a tribunal capable of expressing such an opinion; it is the great representative assembly of this country. Nor can it be said at the present moment that that representative assembly is stale, or that it does not represent the present settled opinion of the country. There has recently been a general election; the elected Members are there sitting; they and they only can adequately express the settled opinion of the people of this country, and, without any disparagement of your Lordships' House, they can do so in a manner more authoritative than we. The House of Commons has not expressed its view upon the Motion of the noble Viscount. It has expressed its views upon another and a different Motion—a Motion which, no doubt, bears with it certain condemnation of the action of Lord Milner. But if the noble Lord wants the settled opinion of this country, let those who agree with him introduce a Motion in these terms into the Lower House of Parliament. Will anyone suggest that if such a Motion was propounded, it would have the remotest chance of being carried in that House? Therefore, in the absence of such an expression of opinion in that House, I think that the general sentiment expressed that the country is indignant at the action of the House of Commons fails in weight when the test to which that opinion could be applied is shirked by those who assert that such a state of things exist.

The passing of the Motion in this House will not in any way affect the settled opinion of the country. But the Motion is a provocative one, and it calls from those who desire to support the Government in not voting for it for some answer as to why they do not approve of the Motion in the terms on the Paper. We are said to have a political prejudice against Lord Milner. It did not exist some years ago. When Lord Milner first went out to South Africa, he went out with the hearty good wishes and the high hopes of every person of every Party in the State. I do not think that any Colonial Governor ever left the shores of this country with such a chance as Lord Milner had of establishing a permanent and an enduring fame. The position was critical. The Jameson Raid, which we now all admit to have been an act of human folly, was just over, and Lord Milner went out to a country which was inhabited by two white races, presenting therefore the difficulties that Canada originally presented, and also an extra difficulty which Canada never did present, namely, that those two white races were faced by an overwhelming native population. He found when he went out there a rooted suspicion on the part of the Dutch, undoubtedly inflamed by the Raid, that the great mineowners who were deeply inplicated in that business were only waiting for another and a more favourable opportunity of repeating it.

What was needed? What was needed was breadth of mind, sympathy of disposition, and a complete severance from Party or race. They ought to exist in any man who represents the Crown, which is above and beyond all Parties in the State. Above all things, time was needed to enable the passions which were then excited to calm down. And time had done wonders even in that short time. People are apt to forget that as soon as the Raid was over the two representative assemblies of the Transvaal and of the Orange Free State both passed Resolutions urging Her Majesty's Government to assume control of the country then under the control of the Chartered Company. That disposes of the fable that from the beginning there was a deeply rooted and widespread conspiracy on the part of the Dutch to get rid of British supremacy in South Africa. Noble Lords seem to believe in that fable still. If so, the answer is that those two representative chambers were only too anxious that the dominions of the Crown should be extended in South Africa, and not diminished. Moreover, one of the first despatches written by Lord Milner was to testify to the united fervour and loyalty that distinguished both Dutch and British in Cape Colony. He said that he drew no distinction between the races, and that these expressions of opinion were not mere expressions of opinion, but were fortified by the fact that the two peoples were joining together to do what no Colony had ever yet done—to present a battleship to the British Fleet and to give in their own land, in Simons Bay, facilities for hospitality to the British Fleet itself. Moreover, that was done by a Government not of the British Party, but by a Government dominated by the Bond, a member of which who looked to the Bond for favour and support was Prime Minister of Cape Colony.

That was the state of South Africa when Lord Milner first took up the reins of office. Within two short years the whole of that state of things disappeared. I may be wrong, and I know your Lordships will differ from me, but the reason I give for that is that Lord Milner ceased to be the representative of the Crown in so far as he held aloof from and was above all Parties in the State, and that he adopted the policy for which your Lordships now wish to commend him and of which you desire to express your admiration; he sided with one party called the British Party against the other party called the Dutch Party. I do not doubt and never have doubted that the Uitlanders in Johannesburg had grievances which they rightly sought to have redressed, but, as the Uitlanders were said actually to outnumber the white Dutch of the Transvaal, it is only fair to the Dutch to say that they had some ground for their suspicion that if the franchise was given in full measure to the Uitlanders they would outnumber the Dutch and would destroy the nationality of the Transvaal for which they were so anxious and which they had fought to preserve. But there were hopes that time would cure these evils. President Kruger was a very old man, and there was a large and progressive Dutch party against the Kruger policy in the Transvaal. Mr. Chamberlain at home had taken means by his speech to pacify the people and to meet all suggestion that there was any connivance at any interruption of the independence of the Transvaal.

In 1898 Lord Milner came back to this country. He had long conferences with the then Colonial Secretary. I cannot tell what passed at those conferences, but it is impossible to resist the conclusion that he had formed the opinion that the diplomatic representations which had been made to the Transvaal were to be turned into something stronger than mere representations, because when Lord Milner went back he seemed really to be in a position of a man who was seeking rather than avoiding a dispute with the Transvaal. His attitude towards the Dutch of the Cape became critical and unfriendly. From that day he adopted without reserve the policy and aims of the British Party in Cape Colony, which British Party, be it observed, was in a minority, and therefore was not the Government over which he was the representative of the Crown. You cannot read the Blue-books of that time without seeing that they are filled with quotations, both heated and rhetorical, in favour of this view; they even repeat all the gossip that came to his ears. When the Dutch, seeing that things were becoming more and more critical, approached him in a great representative gathering to express their loyalty to him, he dismissed them with something approaching a sneer; and when Sir William Butler expressed the opinion that it was rest and not a surgical operation that South Africa wanted, Sir William Butler was recalled from the office which he held.

Then there came a conference, and I sincerely believe that the Government in this country and the Colonial Minister of this country hoped, trusted, and believed that that conference would end in an amicable result. A man who goes into a conference which is to be a diplomatic conference, if he is a wise man, refrains from anything like exaggerated or unguarded language. But just on the eve of this Conference we had that historical and rhetorical Despatch sent by Lord Milner, and read by every Dutchman in Cape Colony and the Transvaal, in which he described the Uitlanders as "helots" and demanded from the Queen's Government—what? "A striking proof of their paramount power in South Africa." That was hardly a conciliatory preface to a conference which was destined to be futile unless it was entered upon in a conciliatory spirit. We search in vain in the records of the conference for the exhibition of such a concilitory spirit. Fresh demands were continually brought forth as each demand was acceded to, and we have it now as an historical and an admitted fact that in the end nine-tenths of the demands made were granted by the opponent Party. When you remember that by law we had no right under any convention to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal—indeed, to force internal reference upon the Transvaal had been described by Mr. Chamberlain as immoral as well as unwise—I think we ought in fairness to admit that President Kruger, in consenting to confer, must be regarded as having given expression to a conciliatory spirit. The conference was futile. After that, of course, war ensued. One of the essential elements of statesmanship is surely foresight. The man who has not foresight is not fitted to play a great part in public affairs. What foresight did Lord Milner exhibit? Who told Mr. Chamberlain that the Boers would not fight? Who told him that a policy of "bluff" would succeed? Who told Mr. Balfour that it was idle to suppose that the Free State would throw in their lot with the Transvaal? If Lord Milner told these statesmen any of these things, all I can say is he lacked the foresight which is one of the essential qualities of of a great ruler.

Time went on. On August 31st, 1899, Lord Milner issued a Despatch which was calculated not to appease, but to inflame animosity. The Despatch is well known in which he says that "British South Africa was prepared for extreme measures," and that what he dreaded—what do you think it was? It was not war that he dreaded, but what he described as a "prolongation of the negotiations." After the war was over, Lord Milner described what I believe to be his policy, because he said that—

> "The British people had gone straight upon the way in which they set out from the first, to make an end of the business once and for all, to make South Africa one country under one flag, with one system of law and government."

I have no doubt that the majority of your Lordships will think that to have been an admirable pursuit. But that is not a ground for our supporting this Motion, because we on this side of the House, I hope, never will support a policy of a war of aggression. To justify such a policy, if that was the policy of Lord Milner from the first, would be to justify aggressive wars whenever entered upon on the final grounds that the end justified the means.

I am well aware, my Lords, that the war was begun by the Boers, and that the ultimatum was followed by an invasion of British territory—an action which is as great a monument of human folly as the Jameson Raid. I cannot help coming to the opinion that the Boers, who after all were sensible people, would never have indulged in that act of folly unless they had been irresistibly driven to the conclusion from their point of view that Lord Milner intended to attack them and had determined for themselves to strike the first blow.

With regard to the war, Lord Milner may be properly acquitted. There came in the Military and the Executive. With regard to the conduct of the war and the incidents of the war no one seeks to lay any blame upon Lord Milner; he was merely the agent of the Government who supported him. But he was responsible for another act, a sinister act, and that was the attempt, after the war, to suppress the Constitution in Cape Colony. In that attempt he was again playing the part, not of an independent High Commissioner representing the Crown above and beyond all Parties in the State, but of the advocate of one Party only. He was thwarted, but how? Let noble Lords who are so desirous of promoting the spread of Imperial views note that the agency which thwarted the action of Lord Milner in attempting to suppress the Constitution in Cape Colony was not the British Government at home, but the Colonial Prime Ministers who were in this country at the time, who remonstrated with the Home Government upon the reputed act of Lord Milner, and it was their sound Imperial ideas that put an end to what I cannot help thinking were the unsound Imperial ideas of Lord Milner himself. It is not a pleasant thing to reflect what might have happened had Lord Milner had his way. We might then indeed have lost to the Empire not only the Transvaal but Cape Colony itself. What I ask, in all reason, would a wise, prudent, and far-seeing Governor do? Would not his first aim, under the new conditions, be to make all fellow-citizens of the Empire forget for ever that they were either Briton on the one side or Boer on the other? But Lord Milner was again, as he has been all through, a slave to his bureaucratic ideas. He has formed the idea that all the Dutch must be disloyal, all the British loyal, and that as the British were in a minority on the land the only way to redress the balance was to expropriate the Boer and plant the Britisher on the land. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes. I will quote Lord Milner's own words about it. He wanted practically to plant another Ulster in the new Colonies which had been added to the Empire. His ideal seemed to be more the ideal of Germany and the Poles, because on January 25th, 1902—I will read his own words—he said this—

> "A selected British population will do much to consolidate South African sentiment in the general interests of the Empire."

[Several NOBLE LORDS: Hear, hear!] Yes, "the general interests of the Empire." That means the supremacy of Briton over Boer. That is not my idea of the interest of the Empire.

A NOBLE LORD: Will the noble Lord be good enough to say when and where Lord Milner said he was going to expropriate the Boers?

*LORD COLERIDGE: I will give the noble Lord the reference. It was on January 25th, 1902, Paper Cd. 1163, page 88. Lord Milner said—

> "Land settlement must be undertaken on a large scale, otherwise, however useful, it will be politically unimportant. I do not see how any large schemes can be carried out unless the Government is armed with the general power of expropriation. Without it we shall never be able to get land enough. We want two things—power of expropriation and money."

Can it be suggested that I am incorrect in stating that Lord Milner's policy was to expropriate the Boers and to plant Britishers in their place?

*VISCOUNT HALIFAX: I defy the noble Lord to cite a single instance in which a Boer has been expropriated by Lord Milner's action.

*LORD COLERIDGE: I am talking of Lord Milner's policy.

*VISCOUNT HALIFAX: I am talking about Lord Milner's action.

*LORD COLERIDGE: I thought that the noble Lord who seconded the Resolution asked us to approve of his policy, and as this is part of his policy, I am disapproving of it.

*LORD AMPTHILL: The noble Lord must not misquote me. I said that noble Lords opposite could vote for the Resolution with perfect consistency, because it did not necessarily imply that they approved all Lord Milner's policy and actions; it merely meant that they approved of his public services to the Crown.

*LORD COLERIDGE: Then why not in that case distinguish it in the Motion instead of using ambiguous language which is open to the interpretation which almost every noble Lord opposite has given to it, that it is to redress the balance between the House of Lords and the House of Commons and to approve the policy of a great public servant?

From this time onwards we come to the question of Chinese labour. [" Oh, oh ! "] I am not going to enter upon that question; we have had many debates, and I am not going to repeat what has taken place. I will only point out to noble Lords opposite that, so far as I can gather, on no occasion did the policy of Lord Milner differ in any respect from the policy of the Chamber of Mines, which, after all, is not the embodiment of absolute colonial wisdom. I am not going to deal with the question of the slight irregularity, as some noble Lords describe it, of the permission of illegal flogging in the compounds. I cannot conceive how any man who has read history, who cares for the liberty of the subject, or who has any regard for our Imperial rule, can look upon illegal flogging of persons in compounds as a light matter.

Finally, Lord Milner comes to this House and makes a speech full of the bitterest political diatribes—["No, no"]—against all those who differ from his policy in South Africa. He applied to his political opponents—and I suppose we are among them—all those old question-begging epithets which had their day in the general election of 1900, and which I should think sensible and charitable men had long disregarded and perhaps now regretted having ever used. A Resolution of this House if passed, and I doubt not it will be, will not alter the facts. Noble Lords are perfectly well aware that the country is against the policy of Lord Milner. [Cries of dissent.] Then why not put it to the test? They are well aware that the House of Commons is against the policy of Lord Milner, and certainly in many respects the Colonies are also against that policy. I suppose it is a consciousness of these facts which is the explanation of the overflowing bitterness which characterised the speech of Lord Milner. The noble Viscount who brought this Motion forward cannot expect us, with these Party attacks from Lord Milner himself ringing still in our ears, to support this Motion.

I quite understand that the position is critical. I quite understand that the Government, having now sent out an impartial Commission of Inquiry—[" Oh, oh !] Is it not an impartial Commission? [Cries of " No."] Noble Lords no doubt in the debate will give their reasons for that assertion, but I repeat that this is an impartial Commission. Whether partial or impartial does not affect my argument. The Government is sending out a Commission of Inquiry, and I can quite understand that under those circumstances to oppose this Motion by a direct negative might bring difficulties in the way of the work of that Commission. The noble Viscount thinks that everything will be remedied by inscribing this Motion on the journals of the House. The facts with regard to the policy of Lord Milner are known. We have all in this country made up our minds one way or the other about those facts. The recording of this Motion, whether it be wise or discreet, is another matter, but the recording of it will detract nothing from that opinion and will add nothing to it.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I shall take care not to detain the House many minutes at this late hour of the night, but I think your Lordships will agree with me when I say that one or two of the speeches which we have heard from the other side of the House lately have in no small degree changed the issue upon which we shall vote to-night. I venture to say that, whatever they may do, whether or not they have changed the issue, those speeches will not get any increased support for the proposition moved from the front Government Bench. The two speeches that we have listened to—that of the noble Lord below the gangway and that of the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down—are in no sense appropriate to the Motion for the previous question. If they had been carried to their logical and honest conclusion they would have been appropriate to a Motion, to meet that moved by the noble Viscount, by a direct and unqualified negative.

The noble Lord below the gangway said, in perfectly plain terms, that they were going to oppose the Motion because they did not agree with Lord Milner's policy. He said that the Motion was intended to serve a double purpose, and the noble and learned Lord who has just spoken tried to prove that the reason why this House should reject the Motion submitted by the noble Viscount was that he and others who thought with him did not agree with Lord Milner's policy, and that this was, as he described it, a provocative Motion. Do not let us mistake the issue. It is of importance to Lord Milner that a majority of the House in which he sits should express their appreciation of his services. It is of importance to us who agree with that policy in its main outlines, to us who are responsible for it in its main outlines, that we should record oui appreciation of his services. But it is not of so much importance that we should vote in favour of the Motion on those grounds as to prevent misconceptions arising elsewhere. Lord Milner's record is known. We have our own opinions, and, whatever noble Lords opposite may say, I believe the opinions held on this side of the House are those of the great majority of our fellow-countrymen.

Their minds are made up on this matter, whatever the late general election may be said to have turned upon. Some say it was the swing of the pendulum, others that it turned upon what is called Chinese slavery, or the fiscal question, or that the result was due to the uprising of labour representation, or to the general record of the late Government, and some even claim it as a victory for Home Rule. But, my Lords, I venture to say, as one who watched what took place during the month of January, there is not a tittle of proof to show that in any respect whatever this country has changed its mind with regard to the South African policy of the late Government. I believe that His Majesty's Government know that, and I believe it is because they know it that they have chosen to meet this Motion with one for the previous question, and not with a direct negative, which, as I have said, is the only logical conclusion after the speeches we have heard from noble Lords opposite. If any one doubts the proposal in this Motion then let him move a direct negative. That is the honest, fair, and straightforward course to take; but, if noble Lords do not believe that this Motion is wrong, then I say it is a mere and simple act of justice, after what has occurred elsewhere, to pass it by as large a majority as we can.

Has Lord Milner proved himself a good public servant? Then why should we not say so? The noble Lord who spoke last said that this Motion is a provocative Motion. I say that is absolutely untrue. This Motion would never have been heard of if it had not been for action taken in the other House, and the mere question of whether Lord Milner was right or wrong in a particular matter which was made the point of the Motion proposed elsewhere was not the real point at issue. That was a cloak for a vote in another place, which might be taken, and I venture to say was taken, as a vindictive Motion, in the hope of discrediting a great public servant on a comparatively small side issue which, in respect to his great career, ought to have been passed over almost in silence. For that reason I say it was a vindictive Motion. The point I want to make is this, that we are not to-night speaking or going to vote upon this question only as a thing personal to Lord Milner or as a matter of our own domestic policy. I think we ought to pass this Resolution by a large majority to prevent misconceptions elsewhere, to prevent misconceptions in South Africa, to prevent the very view gaining currency in South Africa which has been expressed by the noble Lord who spoke last, that this country has in any way changed its mind upon the South African policy of Lord Milner and the late Government.

I am sure those of your Lordships who were here on Tuesday were gratified to hear first hand evidence from Lord Lovat and the Duke of Westminster that there was not that race hatred between Briton and Boer when they were living side by side on the veldt, and I believe that almost all testimony shows that many of the leaders of the Boer race are accepting the present position and reconciling themselves to it. But, on the other hand, there are some who are not accepting the present position, and what I am afraid of is that some of the speeches which have been recently made in Parliament, if they are reproduced in South Africa, will tend to increase that feeling, and will hinder the process of fraternisation, and re-awaken the racial animosities which we should desire to see buried altogether. There is another fear. No matter how good the law may be, in matters of land and things of that kind a great deal depends upon the administration of the law, and if those who may, under the new Constitution, have to administer the law think that in any act of injustice they will find friends here, there will be more temptation to attempt to reverse the past settlement than if they could be got to appreciate, as I believe to be the case, that the feeling of this country is unanimous that South Africa must always remain British.

I wish also to say that I value this Motion because it will furnish strength to those who go abroad in high places to serve the country. Their position is difficult under any circumstances. Their responsibility is great. You hear in this country of the fierce light that beats upon a Throne, but the Throne here has responsible advisers—advisers who are in touch with the prevailing opinion of the people, and who take a great responsibility off the Throne. But the representatives of the Throne in these great dependencies are in a position, comparatively speaking, of isolation. They have in such Crown Colonies as some of those of South Africa no responsible advisers. They have to act upon their own responsibility, and in that they have a very difficult task. I venture to say that no man in the recollection of any of your Lordships ever had a more difficult task from firist to last than that which was laid on the shoulders of Lord Milner. He sustained that burden through a long period, a period of continuous work, when day after day he had to take decisions of the greatest importance. Even in the darkest and most difficult times his courage never failed him, and by the testimony of friend and foe alike he steered a straight course, which has gained for him the undying respect of all his fellow-countrymen.

Do not let us allow domestic issues and domestic differences to taint justice to a great public servant. Do not let us allow domestic difficulties to avail against doing what I believe to be a real act of justice to one who has served us well. I think it will be a very bad lesson to those who may have to go out in the future to great positions if, not only during their period of office, but after that period is over, points comparatively small are raked up against them, and votes of censure moved when there is no possibility of their defending themselves, and when those who would naturally defend them are out of power. If Lord Milner had been actually High Commissioner, if the Government that sent him there and was supporting him had been in power, then I would have nothing to say against a vote of censure on the part of either House of Parliament. But I venture to say that there is hardly a precedent to be found for the particular proposal in the other House, and that it is absurd to call this Motion a provocative Motion, when those who support Lord Milner were not the first to take action.

I venture to say that His Majesty's Government would have come before us to-night with a better grace if they had moved the previous question in the other House of Parliament. In that House there was a question of censure; here there is a question of praise. It might have been better if neither had been moved, and I venture to say that I would not have been found supporting this Motion against a Motion for the previous question if His Majesty's Government had given a clear lead and equal justice in both Houses of Parliament. If in the other House they had moved the previous question, they could have come before us with a fair case to ask us not to do the thing which they had asked the other House of Parliament not to do. A Motion of censure on Lord Milner stands on the public records of the other House, and therefore I do not think the Government come before us with a good grace when they seek to meet a Motion of this kind with a Motion for the previous question, especially when we know that that is not what is in the minds of many of their supporters, whatever may be in their own minds. Many of them would have desired, and have made speeches pointing to, a Motion of censure and not to the previous question. After the speech to which we have just listened, we know what is in the minds of those who are anxious to discredit Lord Milner, and I wish to record my vote, and I hope the majority of your Lordships will record your votes, in emphatic praise of one who has served his country well and faithfully.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, as hour by hour I have listened to this debate I have become more and more convinced of the wisdom of the Amendment which my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has brought forward, but which does not appear to have been even understood by many noble Lords opposite. My noble friend's object was to tell your Lordships that he was engaged in difficult duties, in endeavouring to prepare, after the most careful consideration and the freest communication with the Government in South Africa, a Constitution or Constitutions for the two new Colonies by which he hopes to bring increased peace and unity to the people of that country. My noble friend told your Lordships, but you do not seem to have taken note of it, on his authority as Secretary of State for the Colonies, that he felt that a debate of this kind could not be conducted in this House without raising questions which would be calculated inevitably once more to stir up the angry and embittered feelings generated by the late war, and thereby to render the task which he had in hand, arduous as it is, more difficult still.

We have had from the commencement of this debate down to the present time signal proof in speech after speech of the justice of the judgment of my noble friend. I cannot conceive anything more likely than that the various speeches which have been made to-night should stir up again the embers of those angry feelings which the war generated, and render the pacification of South Africa not easier but more difficult. The noble Viscount who opened this debate went through the whole history of the South African War—indeed he went beyond it. He started at a very early period and went down through that history point after point, and in doing so he inevitably raised many questions calculated to promote angry and hostile feelings among the people who were concerned in the South African War. We all know there is nothing which stirs up hostile feeling between two races more than war. Surely, then, it is the object of all wise men, when war is over, to endeavour to allay the bitter and angry memories which that war created. My Lords, if that is true of all wars, it is particularly true of a war of conquest. There you have the most potent and overpowering reasons for trying, as soon as possible, to put aside those passions, and endeavour to deal in a fair, equal, and considerate spirit with those who have become your subjects. That, my Lords, is the object of my noble friend, that is the duty in which my noble friend is now engaged, and that is the duty which he told you, with all the authority of his position, that you would by this debate render infinitely more difficult. If that had been your object—I do not think for one moment that it was—you could not have done more in the space of a few hours than you have done to-night to promote it.

This debate has been in some respects a singular one. The question before us has from time to time changed its aspect. My noble friend Lord Halifax, whose generous and honest nature prompted him to speak on behalf of one for whom he has unbounded admiration, confined himself, I admit, to what I must consider the dangerous proceeding of alluding to past history both before the war and during the war. But the noble Lord opposite, Lord Cawdor, adopted a different tone. He laid down the broad principle that it is the duty of the Houses of Parliament to pass votes of approval on behalf of all our public servants who had done good service abroad.

*EARL CAWDOR: I beg the noble Marquess's pardon. I never stated that both Houses of Parliament should be perpetually passing votes in favour of officials. I said nothing of the kind.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: If I have fallen into an error I have done so in common with the most rev. Primate, because it was against that suggestion that the most rev. Primate protested in the commencement of his speech. If the noble Lord did not intend to say that there is an end of it. If you pass Resolutions of this kind in regard to those who have done good service abroad you should do it when that service ends. We have heard language used to-night as if Lord Milner had received no recognition of his services. That cannot be said, for Lord Milner sits in this House in recognition of his services. His services were recognised at the time in a way supposed to be appropriate and sufficient by the Government that he had served. I say, my Lords, that I think it is a bad precedent to propose in this House, or in the other House of Parliament, votes of this description as a recognition for services rendered some time ago and which were rewarded as the Government of the Crown considered proper at the time they ended.

I pass from the noble Earl opposite and his view of the subject and come to what was said by my noble friend, Lord Goschen. What did Lord Goschen say? Lord Goschen, who, as we all know, is a personal friend of the noble Viscount, told us that Lord Milner did not want any vote of this House or any special recognition of his services, and that the real object of this Motion was to send a message of support to one particular Party in South Africa. My Lords, it is exactly against that that we desire to protest. It is just because we know that that will be the sense in which that particular Party will take these proceedings, and because we fear that it will tend to raise again differences in South Africa, that we have determined not to discuss this question, but to take the course which seems best to mark our conviction of the mischief and danger of the policy which you are pursuing and to leave upon you the full responsibility for the results of that policy.

But, my Lords, there is another aspect of these proceedings which ought to be considered by noble Lords opposite, and that is the position you are about to create between the two Houses of Parliament. The noble and learned Earl opposite, in a sort of by-sentence as he sat down, seemed to recognise, as he most fully does, I am sure, the irregularity of a great deal of what has gone on to-night. I do not say on which side; on both sides, if you like; but you have been the greater sinners because you have been the assailants. I have been fifty years in this House, and I have never seen such an attack, in language and in form, upon the other House as I have had the misfortune to witness to-night. I do not know what may follow on these proceedings. I hope that nothing will follow from them, but I do say that it is highly undesirable that you should do anything to promote a needless quarrel between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, that you should do anything which is calculated to create what is vulgarly called a "wrangle" between the two Houses.

I believe that the language which has been used to-night is fraught with grave danger. I hope that the wisdom of the other House will avert that danger; but I do most earnestly press upon your Lordships that you should not allow these proceedings to be a precedent, and that you will lay aside the use of language which is calculated to affect the wholesome practice of mutual respect which is generally observed between this and the other House. The noble and learned Earl, I think, described this proceeding under another name. He called it a testimonial to Lord Milner. Well, my Lords, that might be a very proper thing for your Lordships to promote if you could do it without danger to the public service; but I believe, as Lord Goschen has told us, that nothing is further from Lord Milner's desire than that you should render the task of my noble friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies more difficult than it naturally is. I heard the speech which the noble Viscount Lord Milner made the other night. Noble Lords opposite have not taken a lesson from him whom they are here to-night, they tell us, to defend. They have not taken his advice; they have, on the contrary, pursued a course, and are pursuing a course at the present time, which will have effects, in all human probability, that they will all regret.

It seems that nothing can be done in reference to the affairs in South Africa without its being met by some disparaging incident in this House at the present time. My noble friend behind me has sent out four very distinguished gentlemen to examine into certain questions of fact upon which he requires some information. The Government would gladly have settled the pending questions at once, had they been able to do so. They know the inconvenience of, and the objections to, delay, but they had not before them that sort of detailed information which would have enabled them to form a judgment on the various matters connected with the duties they are called upon to perform. The words "men of honour and impartiality" were challenged just now. I know my right hon. friend Sir West Ridgeway. He served under me in India. I have known him long, and I know him to be an honest and impartial man. Noble Lords on both sides of the House know my noble friend Lord Sandhurst, aye, and they know the sacrifice with which at the present moment he has undertaken this duty. Those who know anything of the Board of Trade know that there is no more distinguished public servant than Sir Francis Hopwood, and the other member of the Committee is Colonel Johnston, a gentleman I know nothing of, who belongs to the service in South Africa. If passion in this House runs so high that the character of these men can be challenged, then I only say it is further proof of the evil which must inevitably result from discussions of this kind. I will not enter into the merits of this question, because it would be inconsistent with the view that I take if I were to do so. I regret sincerely and deeply the tone, and the language, and the results of this debate, and I am quite certain that we meet it in the right and in a becoming manner in moving the previous question.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I shall follow the example of the noble Marquess and compress within the smallest limits the observations I desire to make. Enough, indeed, has been said already on this side, to establish the case which we desire to submit. We have been discussing two distinct questions. In the first place, is Lord Milner or is he not entitled to that recognition which will be afforded to him by the Resolution placed on the Paper by Lord Halifax; and in the second place, supposing that he is entitled to such recognition, is it or is it not proper and convenient that our admiration of him should be expressed in this particular form?

With regard to the first of those questions, I venture to think that the testimony that has been offered in Lord Milner's favour during the course of this discussion may fairly be described as overwhelming. It has probably fallen to the lot of few public servants to have such encomiums passed upon them as those which have been passed this evening by the noble mover, by Lord Goschen, by Lord Roberts, by the most rev. Prelate, and others; and I rejoice to think that we may claim amongst those who share our high opinion of Lord Milner the noble Earl who fills the high office of Secretary of State for the Colonies, for in the course of his speech this evening he adhered, and if anything emphasised, the generous words which he spoke in regard to Lord Milner the other day, words which he described to us this evening as being not so much a generous as a just appreciation of his services.

Almost the solitary note of discord was struck by the speech of the noble and learned Lord on the back benches opposite. He passed in review Lord Milner's career, and I gather from him that in his opinion Lord Milner, instead of being the high-minded and faithful public servant we have always supposed him to be, is an unscrupulous and dangerous partisan who approached his task with the set purpose, not of holding the balance between the different sections of the community entrusted to his charge, but of doing deliberate injustice to the Dutch portion of the South African community. That is very far from being our opinion of Lord Milner, and I must say that when I heard the noble and learned Lord's account of Lord Milner's policy of land settlement, I asked myself whether it was the same policy of land settlement which was described to your Lordships in such temperate and interesting terms by Lord Milner himself in this House the other evening, in a speech in which he made it abundantly clear to us that the object of his land policy was not to get rid of the Boer population, but to establish side by side with the Boer population a British element which might in the future be a link between Boer and Briton in South Africa.

It seems to me, however, that the strongest argument in favour of the Resolution of my noble friend is one which has been supplied by the action of the Government. What are the Government going to do? They are going at once, skipping the intermediate stages through which so many British colonies have had to pass, to confer upon the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies full responsible government. My Lords, if those two colonies are already fitted to receive the boon of responsible government, to whom is that satisfactory condition of things due? If it were not for the manner in which Lord Milner had discharged the great duties of his position, do you believe, my Lords, that there could be any question of conferring responsible government upon these two colonies?

Lord Milner found the country at the end of the war wrecked, desolated, without administrative machinery, its finances in disorder. He has left it with a fully developed administration, with proper courts of justice, with a system of railways fully developed, with roads, bridges, and all the equipment necessary to ensure its prosperity, and it is because Lord Milner has been able to do all this, and to do it successfully, that you are now able to confer upon the two colonies responsible government instead of requiring them to pass through an intermediate stage. No services, it seems to me, could be more brilliant than these.

And what is there that you desire to set on the other side of the account? We are told that, if we vote for this Resolution, we vote confidence in the South African policy of the late Government. We do nothing of the kind. The policy carried out by Lord Milner was, no doubt, the policy enjoined upon him by the Government of the day, but the manner in which Lord Milner interpreted that policy, the manner in which he dealt with the many great problems which he had to solve—these were matters for which he, and he alone, deserves the credit which we desire he should receive at the hands of this House.

Does it not then come to this, that there is really one thing, and one only, that you can allege as a reason why this Resolution ought not to be carried? We come back to the incident of the illegal flogging. That is the single incident in a career of eight years onerous and honourable work to which you are able to take exception. It is an incident which has been explained by Lodr Milner himself, not only frankly, but in the most chivalrous manner; for remember that even on the admission of those who have judged him most harshly there is a grave doubt as to the extent of Lord Milner's own responsibility for that irregularity. And surely when your Lordships pass judgment on that particular episode you must remember what you have been told more than once of Lord Milner's notorious kindness and consideration towards native races, toward coloured men, no matter of what race.

How unfortunate it is that all these questions could not be thoroughly sifted and examined by a Commission of Inquiry such as that we have again and again pressed for. Is it not clear that such an inquiry would have placed all these facts in their true relation and true proportion one to the other? I say, at any rate, of this episode of irregular flogging that there never was a question less deserving either of direct censure or of that more insidious but, to my mind, even more objectionable censure by innuendo of which we have seen a specimen in the Resolution carried in the other House.

One word as to what is called the opportuneness of this Resolution. We have been told again and again, and by no one more emphatically than by the noble Marquess who has just sat down that by carrying this Resolution we are likely to create a dangerous exasperation of feeling in South Africa. Does the noble Marquess suppose that there is not already a very considerable exasperation of feeling in South Africa? My Lords, there is. You have only to read the South African telegrams coming in day by day and published in the newspapers to feel that exasperation has been created, not by this Resolution, but by the manner in which this question has been dealt with in another place. It has been created by the manner in which a private Member was, I will not say encouraged, but at any rate allowed, to put on the Paper a Motion directly censuring Lord Milner. For remember that this question of irregular flogging had been fully dealt with, and dealt with in a manner which ought to have satisfied even those who most disapproved of what had taken place. The objectionable order had been cancelled, and the Secretary for the Colonies had formally placed on record his disapproval of what had occurred. What, then, was the object of the Resolution of censure, and what action could be more unsatisfactory than the manner in which that Resolution of censure was dealt with by his Majesty's Government? The noble Lord who spoke below the gangway, Lord Grimthorpe, told us that we were, in effect, censuring the House of Commons for what they have done, and the noble Marquess warned us that we were committing what seemed to him to be a grave irregularity when we opposed our opinion to the opinion of the other House. I do not yield to the noble Marquess in deprecating any action which might have the effect of needlessly placing the two Houses of Parliament in conflict. The relations of the two Houses are of a very delicate character, and nothing could be more unfortunate than any action which might have the effect of creating embarrassment between the two Houses. But, in the first place, I ask your Lordships to observe that this Resolution may be fairly interpreted rather as a complement to the Resolution of the House of Commons than as one which traverses the judgment of of the other House. The matter has been put on one side by the other House and has been left, as it were, in a position of suspense. That is a condition in which we do not desire that it should remain.

This is not a case where our action is at all likely to bring about that which would be the most unfortunate of all things—a deadlock between the two Houses. The noble Marquess spoke of a wrangle. Why should there be a wrangle? The other House has expressed a strong opinion; we claim a corresponding right to express a strong opinion which we feel, and to have that opinion recorded on the journals of the House. Are we really to be told in a matter of high Imperial importance to the public of this country, touching very nearly indeed the sympathies and feelings of our colonial possessions, touching besides the honour and reputation of a most brilliant and distinguished Member of this House, that we are to be condemned to silence merely because the other House of Parliament happens to have treated the question, and to have treated it in a perfunctory and inconclusive manner? That really seems to me to be a doctrine which this House could not possibly accept. We claim to have the right of pronouncing for historical purposes a judgment which will remain on record alongside the judgment which has been pronounced elsewhere.

If I may sum up, I would suggest to your Lordships that that it is absolutely impossible, having the feelings we entertain, that we can allow this matter to remain where it has been left by the House of Commons. It is not, as we have been told, that we desire to pay a mere compliment to Lord Milner. Lord Milner has established for himself a position in which he stands in no need of such compliments. He stands no more in need of such compliments than he does of the merciful treatment which, forsooth, he was told by the representative of the Colonial Office in the House of Commons he might expect at the hands of His Majesty's Government. No, my Lords, it is not for the sake of Lord Milner's feelings that we are going to pass this Resolution. We are thinking of the manner in which this question is regarded in the first place by the people of our own country and in the next place by our great Colonies, and more especially by the loyal population of South Africa. In their eyes Lord Milner has for years past stood conspicuous as the champion of that British supremacy which they desire to be maintained and which I trust your Lordships will never allow to be tampered with. I think that to the lips of many of Lord Milner's admirers, in this country and the Colonies, there must lately have risen a saying, old indeed, but one of the most pathetic known to our language—

> "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country and in his own house."

My Lords, this is Lord Milner's House, and we are determined that in this House he shall not be without the honour which is due to him. And when we offer him as we do, that honour, in full measure and with open hands, we believe we are correctly interpreting the feeling of the great majority of the people of this country.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD LOREBURN): My Lords, the original Motion was, "That this House desires to place on record its high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire," since which it has been moved "That the previous question be put." The question, therefore, which I have to put is, whether the said original question be now put.

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O'Hagan, L.

Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Stanley of Alderley L.

Stanmore, L.
Tenterden, L.
Tweedmouth, L.

Wandsworth, L.
Weardale, L.
Wimborne, L.

Original Motion put accordingly and agreed to.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY BILL.

Brought from the Commons and read 1ª, and to be printed.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; then (Standing Order No. xxxix. having been suspended), Bill read 2ª (The Lord Privy Seal (*M. Ripon*)): Committee negatived: Bill read 3ª, and passed.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House on the subject of Sunday trading, do meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Committee Room A, on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock, as proposed by this House.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz. :—L. Sinclair, L. Killanin; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

THE NATAL MINISTRY.

On the Motion for the adjournment,

*The MARQUESS of LANSDOWNE said: My Lords, before the House rises, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question of which I have given him private notice — namely, whether he has any information to the effect that the Government of Natal have resigned or tendered their resignation; and, if so, whether he can state the reasons which led to their taking this action.

*The EARL of ELGIN: My Lords, I only received this Question about half an hour ago, and of course have not been able to get any further information than I had before. We were informed yesterday by telegram from the Governor that twelve natives had been tried by court-martial, found guilty of murder, and sentenced to be shot. No further details were given. A telegram was sent to the Governor commenting on the serious nature of this communication, and requesting him to suspend the execution of the sentence pending further information. No reply has been received to this message, and I have no further official information. I may state, however, that I understand that the news agencies have been informed that the Natal Government have resigned, but remain in office pending further communication. There is no possible intention, I may say, of any want of sympathy with the Government of Natal in the circumstances of the Colony at the present moment or any idea of interfering with a self-governing Colony; but the execution of twelve men under sentence by court-martial is a serious matter, and I have to consider it in view of possible demands for the assistance of British troops. I think it was my duty to ask for the information I did.

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock
till To-morrow, half-past Ten
o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 29th March, 1906.

The House met at Two of the clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bill Petitions (Standing Orders not complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Shrewsbury Corporation Water.

Ordered, that the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Dowlais Gas Bill,—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Dundee, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Leeds, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (RELIGIOUS TEACHING).

Petitions against alteration of Law ; From Ashworth ; Bamack cum Southorpe ; Bamburgh ; Bampton (two); Bapchild (two) ; Barton St. David ; Belmont ; Berwick-on-Tweed ; Binsted (two) ; Bishop's Fonthill (two) ; Bothal ; Bournemouth ; Broadwell and Kencot ; Burneston ; Catherington (two) ; Chadlington ; Cherhill ; Chewton Mendip ; Chollerton ; Church Broughton ; Cirencester ; Cleckheaton with Scholes (two) ; Clyst ; Coldhurst ; Collingbourne Ducis ; Colton ; Compton Paunceforte with Blackford ; Crawley Down ; Digswell (two) ; Dogmersfield ; Dowdeswell ; Droylesden ; Droyleseden St. Mary's (two) ; Easingwold ; Eastham ; Ellingham ; Empshott ; Frankby ; Funderhall ; Gainsborough ; Great Yeldham ; Hedley ; Heywood ; Holborn ; Holdenhurst ; Ilderton ; Iron Acton ; Laindon cum Basildon ; Langford ; Langho (two) ; Levenshulme (two) ; Lintle Horsted (two) ; Llandyfriog ; Lytham (two) ; Manchester ; Marchington Woodlands (two) ; Mavesyn Ridware (two) ; Middlesbrough ; Nettlebed ; New Windsor ; North Sunderland ; Norton ; Oldham (two) ; Otterburn ; Paddington (two) ; Penwortham ; Pitney ; Rearsby (two) ; Rochdale ; Rockhampton ; Rownhams ; St. Clement's, York ; St. Columba, Southwick-on-Wear ; Sandon ; Shelfanger ; Shottery ; Somerton (two) ; South Cerney (two) ; Stannington ; Stanton St. John ; Stocksfield ; Stratford-on-Avon ; Sutterby ; Sutton Montis ; Sutton Veny ; Tasburgh ; Thelwall (two) ; Thornaby-on-Tees (two) ; Thorpe ; Tingrith ; Tittleshall ; Tottenham ; Tottington ; Trimingham (two) ; Tunstead (two) ; Wacton (two) ; Walmsley ; Wanborough ; Wardle ; West Gorton ; Whissonsett ; Whitadder ; Whittonstall ; Wickwar ; and, Wimbish (two) ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1904, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1905, &c. [by Act] ; to lie yon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 99.]

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TUBERCULOSIS.

Copy presented, of Report of the Delegates of His Majesty's Government to the International Congress on Tuberculosis, held at Paris in October, 1905 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION.)

Copy presented, of Report on American Manuscripts in the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Vol. II. [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE MARKS ACT, 1905.

Copy presented, of Statutory Rules and Orders, dated 24th March, 1906, made by the Board of Trade under the Trade Marks Act, 1905 [by Act] to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL MINES.

Address for "Return of the output of Gold from the South African Mines in the Transvaal for the five years preceding the importation of Chinese labour."—(*Mr. Verney.*)

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Address for "Return of the net Income and Expenditure of British India under certain specified heads for the eleven years from 1894–5 to 1904–5 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 178, of session 1905.)"—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Address for "Copy of Workmen's Compensation Bill showing the effect on existing Acts."—(*Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Criticism of Admiralty Policy by Individual Members of the Board.

CAPTAIN HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the misconduct which would entitle the Admiralty to deprive an officer of any part of his pay or pension, under the Order in Council of the 20th November, 1905, would include an action such as criticising either the policy of the Admiralty or any individual Member of the Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) I am advised that mere criticism of the policy of the Admiralty, or any individual member of the Board, could not be interpreted as misconduct, within the meaning of Section 7 of the Order in Council.

Surcharge for Extra Diet on New Year's Day in Barnhall Poorhouse, etc.

MR. WOOD (Glasgow, St. Rollox): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that a surcharge has been made upon certain members of the Glasgow Parish Council for having voted extra diet on New Year's Day to the pauper inmates of the Barnhall Poorhouse and Stobhill Hospital; and whether he will undertake to look into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) Under the Law of Scotland the expenditure was illegal. The parish council authorised the expenditure in the knowledge of this, which was expressly brought under their notice by the clerk of the parish council; and, on the payment being reported for surcharge at the audit, the Local Government Board did not feel justified in exercising their power of refraining from surcharge.

Summary Punishments in the Navy.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the increase in the number of summary punishments in the Navy afloat since 1894, in proportion to the numbers borne, whereas in regard to the Marines ashore there has been a diminution, from 3,681 summary punishments among 6,452 marines on shore in 1894, to 1,842 among 7,937 of the force in 1904; and whether the Admiralty can offer any explanation of the fact that there was more than one summary punishment per man afloat, and less than one summary punishment per four men ashore in 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The increase in the number of summary punishments is considered to be due to the large expansion of the *personnel* of the Fleet, and the consequent younger average age of the ships' companies; the disproportion between offences committed "afloat" and "ashore" is to be attributed to the fact that life at sea is subject to greater restrictions, and is more arduous than in barracks on shore.

British Museum's Collection of Irish Bells.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if in view of the re-arrangement of the collections of the British Museum, he will suggest to the authorities the advisability of returning to Ireland their collection of ancient Irish bells, which are of no interest to the museum, which are of no value to that institution, and of no interest to the British public, but which are of great interest to Ireland, and should be preserved in the National Museum in Dublin; and if, in the event of the British Museum trustees agreeing to the transfer, the Government will introduce the necessary legislation to carry it out.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*): I am informed that the ancient Irish bells in the British Museum are regarded by the trustees as possessing, in relation to the native art of Britain and other countries, a very decided interest for students generally. The British Museum aims at being a museum of general archæology, and, for the purposes of archæological study in the widest sense, the trustees endeavour to make their collections as representative as possible. I should have been glad if it had been found possible to transfer the collection to Dublin, but the policy which the authorities of the Museum feel called upon to follow offers no prospect of meeting the hon. Baronet's wishes in the matter.

Post Office Adult Messengers.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of adult messengers employed in the provincial towns of the United Kingdom, the number that are over twenty-five years old, and the number who have over fifteen years' postal service; whether, as the principle fixing the minimum of 23s. 6d. a week for postmen was mainly based on the conditions that they were over twenty-five years old, and probably married, and the cost of living in large provincial towns, and that these conditions equally apply to adult night messengers, he will explain why the latter, some of whom are over forty years old and have over twenty years' aggregate service, are paid a maximum of only 19s. a week; and will he have these and all other previous Questions asked during this Session regarding adult messengers brought under the notice of the Select Committee.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The number of adult night messengers in provincial towns is approximately 100, but I cannot, without inquiry, furnish the hon. Member with the further details for which he asks. The work of the messengers in question is, however, very simple, and their case has no analogy with that of the postmen. It is for the Committee to decide whether they will consider that this class should be included in their inquiries.

Position of Donadea (Kildare) Post Office.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether any change has taken place in the locale of the post office at Donadea, Kildare, Ireland; and whether, seeing that the present post office there is 150 yards from the public road, with two gates across the avenue leading thereto, he will say whether other places more suitable were offered to the post office authorities.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am making inquiry in this matter, and I will comunicate the result to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Epizootic Lymphangitis.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether it is generally admitted by veterinary authorities in England that the disease of epizootic lymphangitis was introduced into the United Kingdom by Army horses which returned from active service in South Africa; whether the disease in England was principally confined to Army horses; in how many cases have outbreaks occurred in civilian stables; and whether officers, having horses stabled in barracks in which the disease had appeared, were permitted within a short time after the actual cases of slaughter for the disease to take their horses out of barracks to follow hounds.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. The disease was principally confined to Army horses. Twenty cases have been reported in civilian stables, but in only six cases was the diagnosis confirmed. With regard to the concluding part of the Question, I am informed by the War Office that they have no knowledge of officers of infected units having hunted their horses.

Mr. O'SHEE: To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he will state upon what grounds Colonel Blenkinsop, the chief Army veterinary officer in Ireland, has stated that the disease of epizootic lymphangitis had appeared in the city or county of Waterford a considerable time before any case of the disease occurred in Waterford military barracks.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No such statement can be traced as having been made by the officer in question.

Mr. O'SHEE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as the Reports of the Army Veterinary Department are confidential, he will give the extracts from the Reports, showing that the disease of epizootic lymphangitis is not shown to have been communicated by Army horses at Waterford to civilian horses, but may have been communicated by civilian horses to Army horses.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The hon. Member is doubtless aware that it is not possible in this House to quote extracts from Reports without publishing the Reports in full. I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot comply with his request.

Supposed War Gratuity of late John Duggan of Sutherland Highlanders.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the application of Patrick Duggan, of Galway, for the gratuity due to his son John Duggan, of the Sutherland Highlanders, who had served in the South African War, and, as a result of the wounds there received, died shortly after his return; and whether, in view of Patrick Duggan's age and poverty, he will issue instructions to have any amounts still due paid without delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) My attention has been drawn to this case. There is no sum remaining due to Mr. Duggan on account of his son's estate, and he was so informed on the 17th instant.

Withdrawal of Garrison at St. Helena.

Mr. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed to withdraw the troops from St. Helena during the year 1906–7; and when the evacuation is to begin.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is proposed to withdraw the troops from St. Helena during the year 1906–7, but the date of the evacuation has not yet been settled.

Pensions of Crimean and Indian Mutiny Veterans.

Mr. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he proposes to agree to the prayer of the petition on behalf of the Crimean and Indian Mutiny veterans, which was presented to his predecessor in office, and which asked that the pensions of these old soldiers, now generally over seventy years of age, should be, when below 1s. per day, augmented to that sum.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This matter is still under consideration.

Brigading Experiments in the Army.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in 1901, under the title of the Lancashire Royal Field Artillery, the experiment was tried of forming a brigade of three batteries of field artillery, of which one-third consisted of Regulars, who formed the permanent nucleus of the brigade, and two-thirds of Militia, who came up for two months' training annually; whether this brigade is still in existence; and, if so, what have been the results of the experiment as regards both gunnery and general military effectiveness; and what is its annual cost as compared with the cost of a brigade of Royal Field Artillery.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The brigade to which the hon. and gallant Member alludes is still in existence. The Reports have been satisfactory, especially in view of the amount of training received. The annual cost of the brigade is £21,000, and of a brigade of Royal Field Artillery on the lower establishment is £40,000.

Rewards to Police for arresting a Deserter.

Mr. WILKIE (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether from ten to fifteen shillings is paid by way of reward to any person arresting a deserter; and, if so, will he say why only half of the amount is paid to police constables.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These rewards may be paid to any person for apprehending a deserter in plain clothes. In fixing the amount of the reward the officer commanding is guided by the recommendation of the committing magistrate. The regulations do not differentiate between police constables and others.

Meat Contracts for Barry and Buddon Camps.

Mr. WILKIE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the contracts for butchers' meat supplied to the Barry and Buddon Camps, are open to the tradesmen of Dundee and Forfarshire; and, if so, will he see that an opportunity is given to the butchers of Dundee and district to compete for the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No eligible firms are excluded from tendering for War Department contracts. The tradesmen in question should apply to the General Officer Commanding-in-chief, Scottish Command, for the necessary forms.

Colonial Audit Department.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the Imperial Government at present bears the charge for works and rates of the Colonial Audit Branch under the Controller and Auditor General, and that the Controller and Auditor General, the head of that branch, is paid out of Parliamentary funds, and in view of the present method of recruiting this branch, he will consider the advisability of amalgamating this branch with the Exchequer and Audit Department itself, of paying for the whole Department thus constituted out of Parliamentary funds, and of bringing to account as an Appropriation in Aid of the Exchequer and Audit Vote and the Office of Works Vote the total amount which should be received from Colonial or other funds for the upkeep of this Colonial Audit Branch.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) As already stated in my reply to the hon. Member on the 6th † and 14th ‡ instant, a scheme for the reorganisation of the Colonial Audit Branch is under consideration, and I am not at present in a position to give any further information on the subject.

Exports of Railway Locomotives.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the value of the railway locomotives exported from this country during the last three years, 1903, 1904, and 1905, to the European Continent and the United States; how it compares with 1883, 1884, and 1885; and if those imported by the Foreign Governments concerned, or the State railways, now receive or did receive any special tariff favour.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statement shows the total value of the exports of locomotives from this country in the periods referred to in the question, together with the value of such exports to the European Continent and the United States:—

	In 1883–5.	In 1903–5.
Value of exports of locomotives:—		
1. To all destinations - -	4,545,009	6,672,583
2. To Europe and the United States	859,805	199,360
Of which—		
To Europe -	838,567	197,925
To United States	21,238	1,435

The only countries included under group 2 in which special tariff favours have been accorded to locomotives in the years mentioned are Spain and Portugal. In Spain locomotives imported by railway companies have paid during the period 1903–5, a reduced rate of duty of sixteen pesetas, as comparred with the tariff rate of twenty-four pesetas. In Portugal exemption from duty has been accorded in both periods to articles imported on account of the State railways, or by companies which have secured this privilege by special law.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 271.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliii. 1219–20.

Imports of Hops.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the quantity and value of hops imported into this country from the United States of America in each of the years 1900–5, stating the proportion shipped direct from the Pacific Coast, grown on the Pacific Coast, but shipped from the Atlantic Coast, and grown elsewhere than on the Pacific Coast, and the proportion grown or picked by Chinese labour; and, in the event of the necessary information not being available, whether he will take steps to obtain it from the British consular officers for embodiment in future Trade Returns.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statement gives the information asked for as regards the imports of hops into the United Kingdom directly from the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of the United States respectively:—

Years.	From the Atlantic Coast direct.	From the Pacific Coast direct.	Total.
Quantity.			
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
1900 - - -	147,338	40	147,378
1901 - - -	73,495	165	73,660
1902 - - -	79,196	150	79,346
1903 - - -	69,538	—	69,538
1904 - - -	147,589	—	147,589
1905 - - -	35,427	515	35,942
Value.			
	£	£	£
1900 - - -	585,411	94	585,505
1901 - - -	288,802	670	289,472
1902 - - -	360,193	600	360,793
1903 - - -	391,751	—	391,751
1904 - - -	1,081,819	—	1,081,819
1905 - - -	190,060	1,100	191,160

It is known that the larger proportion of hops grown in the United States is grown in the Western States, but no official information is available either as to the place of growth of the hops exported to the United Kingdom or the character of the labour by which they were grown or picked. In the absence of any official United States statistics bearing upon these points, it mould be impossible for His Majesty's consular officers to procure the information desired.

Irish Provident Assurance Company.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether the Irish Provident Assurance Company furnished his Department with a balance sheet and report for the past year; if so, was it of a satisfactory character; is the Company bound to issue an annual statement of accounts to the shareholders and customers; could he state the manner in which the capital of the Company is invested; and was the £20,000 statutory deposit made last year by a life assurance company with which the Irish Provident Assurance Company propose to transact business found by the latter; and, if not, could he state the manner in which it was found.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Irish Provident Assurance Company, Limited is not empowered to transact life business, and consequently has not furnished the Board of Trade with a balance sheet and report for the past year. The Company is not bound by its articles of association to issue an annual statement of accounts to the shareholders and customers. I cannot say how the capital of the Company is invested; and with regard to the £20,000 deposit by a life assurance company with which the Irish Provident Assurance Company, Limited, propose to transact business, I have no information by whom or how the amount was found.

Cashel Extension Railway Guarantee.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will explain why the understanding come to with the Tipperary County Council, that they would be afforded an opportunity of being represented at the arbitration in connection with the Cashel Extension Railway guarantee, was not carried out, inasmuch as the notice given, only a few days, was insufficient to enable the council to make the necessary arrangements to be represented.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Act of Parliament under which these arbitrations are held does not require notice to be given to the guaranteeing local authorities; but the arbitrator, with whom the Board of Trade have communicated on the subject, states that he wrote to the secretary of the county council on the 13th February telling him that he would sit at Kingsbridge station on the 20th of the same month to hear objections, if any, to the signing of the necessary certificate. The arbitrator subsequently held a further hearing of objections yesterday, the 28th instant, at which the county council, to whom he had given notice of this hearing on 20th March, were represented. The arbitrator adds that, although he considers the notice given by him was in both instances sufficient, he will, in future, increase it to fourteen days.

Keyham Dockyard—Case of John Gaskell.

MR. J. WILLIAMS BENN (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been directed to the case of John Gaskell, assistant boiler maker No. 8116, in the Keyham dockyard, who met with an accident, in the discharge of his duty, on H.M.S. "Prometheus" in June, 1904, and has been allowed by the Admiralty 4s. 3d. per week for twelve months, which allowance terminated on the 17th instant; and will he say whether this workman, after nine years' service is, in view of all the circumstances of the case, entitled to further compensation.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The grant of further compensation depends on the result of the medical examination which, in accordance with the instructions issued when the allowance was granted, has been made. The Report was received on the 27th instant, and will be forwarded forthwith to the Treasury, with whom rests the decision in the matter.

Pembroke Dockyard Discharges.

MR. O. C. PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what provision he proposes making for the employment of the 2,000 dockyard men who will be at the Pembroke dockyard after the proposed discharge of 200 in April and May, seeing that the first-class cruise "Warrior" will be completed at Pembroke dock about August, and the first-class cruiser "Defence" will be launched in October next.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The question of employment of the dockyard men at Pembroke, after the completion of the "Warrior" in 1897, has not been lost sight of. It is not proposed to complete the "Warrior" in August next, as suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

Holloway Post Office Factory.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Postmaster-General what is the number of men who are under notice of dismissal at the Government factory, Holloway (skilled mechanics); and what is the reason for these dismissals.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*). It is my anxious desire so to arrange that the work at the Post Office factories at Holloway and Mount Pleasant shall be, as far as possible, constant, and the fluctuations in employment reduced to a minimum.

Oldbury Langley Schools.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he can see his way to arrange for payment of the annual grants due to Oldbury Langley Holy Trinity School (No. 4505) and to Oldbury Langley Good Shepherd School (No. 4262), both situate in the urban district of Oldbury, for the month of March, 1903, seeing that these schools were opened on the 16th of that month in place of other schools to which grants were paid to 28th February only, although they were not closed until 12th March, and seeing also that the Board of Education has recognised its liability by paying the fee grants for March, 1903, and by sending its forms for the signature of three managers of each school, authorising the first of the three signing in each case to receive payment of the annual grant for the month concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The facts as stated in the Question do not fully represent the position. It is true that the fee grant was paid from 16th March, but it must be remembered that the fee grant and annual grant are not paid under the same conditions, the fee grant being a special grant in place of loss of fees. I have been fully into the case, but I am afraid I cannot see my way to make any further grant to these schools, especially in view of their somewhat unsatisfactory condition when first opened.

Arrest for Debt in India.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will consider the expediency of abolishing throughout India the system of arrest and imprisonment for recovery of arrears of land revenue.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) Arrest and detention as a civil prisoner is confined to cases in which there is reason to believe that the defaulter has the means of discharging his debt. I am informed that the arrest is for the most part formal, and that the proportion of cases in which the issue of a warrant leads to the confinement of the defaulter is small. Females are exempt from the process. I do not propose to take action.

Persia—Newcomen Trade Mission.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that the expenses of the Newcomen Trade Mission to the south-east of Persia have been defrayed mainly by Mr. Newcomen himself; and whether, considering the importance of this mission to the trade of India, he will consider the advisability of granting Government assistance.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) According to the information in my possession, the Government of India paid the travelling expenses of the delegates to Bunder Abbas and back. They also provided transport in Persia free of charge and suitable tents, camp furniture, horses, etc., on a liberal scale, as well as medical attendance and an escort. More than this could hardly be expected; and I am not prepared, as at present advised, to recommend the grant of any further assistance.

Rolling Stock on Indian Government Railways.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been directed to the want of rolling stock on the Government railways in India, especially on the lines leading into Calcutta, and the consequent hindrance to trade; and whether he will take immediate steps to have the supply increased.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am aware that representations have been made that the supply of rolling stock on some of the Indian railways is inadequate. The matter has been under the consideration of the Railway Board, and in the programme of expenditure for the three years 1906–9 provision has been made for a large outlay in increasing the rolling stock on open lines. The expenditure during those three years which has been proposed by the Railway Board, and sanctioned by the Secretary of State, under this head is £6,866,666, of which £2,546,666 is to be spent in 1906–7, £2,253,333 in 1907–8, and £2,066,666 in 1908–9.

Board of Works (Ireland) Clerks.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names, places of birth, and education (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), special qualifications, total length of service, and length of service in the Board of Public Works, Ireland, of all clerks promoted in the secretarial branches of this Department since the 1st April, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Part of the information requested by the hon. Member is regarded by the Civil Service Commissioners as confidential. The compilation of the other particulars asked for would involve a considerable amount of labour and the results obtained would not, in my opinion, be commensurate with the cost. I may add that these remarks equally apply to the Questions† which the hon. Member has down upon the Order Paper for Thursday next, respecting the technical officers in the Board of Works and those officers under the Board whose salaries are £500 or over, as well as his Question about the examiners employed by the Civil Service Commissioners.

Kingstown Public Works.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of labourers are disemployed annually in Kingstown during the winter months, and that adequate remunerative employment exists and is required to be done by the Board of Works; and whether any of the superior officers are dispensed with during the period of disemployment of the labourers.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I am informed that most of the work at the harbour is of a kind that cannot be performed during the winter months. It is not the fact that adequate employment for these men can be found during the winter, though this year it was possible to retain a large proportion of them. The only "superior" officer at Kingstown, the superintendent of works, is retained throughout the year, as his duties, which include the supervision of Howth and Dunmore harbours, are of a continuous nature.

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† To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names, places of birth, and education (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), and special qualifications of all technical officers nominated, appointed, and at present employed by the Board of Public Works, Ireland.

To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can give the names and places of birth (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), of all examiners, assistant examiners, and occasional examiners, and assistant examiners, if any, at present employed by the Civil Service Commission.

To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the names, places of birth, and education (as furnished to the Civil Service Commissioners on appointment), and length of service of all officers in the Board of Public Works, Ireland, in receipt of salaries of not less than £500 a year.

Arklow Harbour.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when he proposes to introduce the legislation necessary for the improvement of Arklow harbour.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) Before legislation can be introduced, it is necessary that plans of the proposed works shall be prepared by an engineer on behalf of the Harbour Commissioners, and submitted to the Government for approval. I understand that the Harbour Commissioners were so informed by the late Government so far back as 23rd October last, but that the Commissioners have only this month selected an engineer for the purpose.

Trinity College Estates.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of estates of which Trinity College is head landlord in regard to which agreements for sale and purchase have been lodged with the Estates Commissioners under the Land Act of 1903; the number of holdings on these estates; the counties in which they are situated; and the terms of sale in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that in order to prepare the Return asked for it would be necessary to take from the Report of the Trinity College Estates Commission a list of the estates of which the college is the head landlord, and to compare this list with the estates which have come before them for sale. The labour involved would be considerable, and as the Estates Commissioners' staff is already fully employed I am loth to impose additional burdens upon it. If, however, the hon. Member should think it a matter of importance to have the information for which he asks I would endeavour to have it prepared; but it would scarcely be ready until after the Easter vacation.

Irish Dispensary Doctors.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of dispensary doctors in Ireland over the age of sixty-five; and whether he is aware of the number in the service, from the infirmities of age, incapable of efficiently discharging their duty to the poor; and will he take any steps to remedy this state of things.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Local Government Board have no information as to the number of dispensary doctors in Ireland who are over the age of sixty-five. In 1903 the Board ascertained that, out of a total of 810 medical officers, 77 had over 30 years service, and it is possible that a considerable proportion of these were advanced in years. The Board have no information as regards the second part of the Question, but doubtless there are medical officers in the service who would retire if they were entitled to a superannuation allowance.

Tullyvin (Cavan) Dispensary District.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any recommendation has been made to the Local Government Board to abolish Tullyvin dispensary district, in the county of Cavan, and to partition it between Cootehill and Drum; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will consider the inadvisability of such a course in the interest of the suffering poor, who would experience inconvenience in cases of emergency, the majority of whom live at a distance of 12 miles from Cootehill and 15 miles from Drum; and whether a petition has been received by the Local Government Board from the clergy and the guardians in opposition to such a project, setting forth the impossibility of having the district attended to in consequence of want of road accommodation, its area, and population.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The Answer to the first Inquiry is in the negative. The fact is that a proposal was made by the guardians to superannuate the medical officer of the Tullyvin dispensary district, and the Local Government Board, in pursuance of their usual policy in such cases, requested the guardians to consider whether the medical officership could be abolished without inconvenience to the sick poor, and outlined a scheme for the rearrangement of the dispensary districts of the union. The inspector of the Local Government Board was of opinion that Tullyvin dispensary might be abolished with advantage. The existing medical officer, however, has not resigned, and the guardians have therefore postponed consideration of the Board's communication. A petition to the effect mentioned in the concluding part of the Question appears on the guardians' minutes of proceedings on the 9th instant.

Labourers' Allotments in Cork—John Keeffe's Case.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the application was made by John Keeffe, of Bridgetown electoral division of Carrigrohanebeg, Cork rural district, for the additional half-acre; he is aware that it was originally marked on the same field as the original allotment, and that it was subsequently changed into inferior lands some distance away, and will he say at whose instigation was this done; and has the change been approved by the Local Government Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Bryce.*) The representation in this case was received by the Local Government Board in January, 1899. The additional half-acre plot is marked on the deposited map as immediately adjoining and to the north of the existing cottage and plot. The clerk of the council has now informed the Board that no change has since been made, but that the tenant of the cottage applied for a change, to which the occupier of the land would not consent.

Dublin College of Science and Art.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the delay in commencing the building of the College of Science and Art in Dublin; and whether he can state when the work will be commenced, in view of the want of employment in Dublin City.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The work was commenced a year ago, and is still in progress.

Royal Army Clothing Department.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the minimum rate of wage at the Royal Army Clothing Department, which, after very careful consideration by the War Office, was to be increased by 2s., *i.e.*, from 21s. to 23s., the increase, however, probably not to take effect until the commencement of the financial year, will be raised at the commencement of next week.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The Reply is in the affirmative.

Soldiers' Pensions—Thomas Shortal's Case.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the case of Thomas Shortal, of Kilkenny, who, after a service of twenty-seven years in the Army, was discharged on a pension of 7d. per day for six months, and who is now sixty years of age, in poverty, and unable to earn; and whether, in view of his long service, good conduct, and that he has two sons still serving in the Army, he will grant him a pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man's case has been considered by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, and he was informed in February last that he was not entitled to any further pension from Army funds. It is not, therefore, within my power to make any grant, as suggested in the Question.

South African Committee and the Government Natal.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Government of Natal will be entitled to offer evidence to the South African Committee; and if, in that event, the reference to the Committee would entitle the Colony of Natal to express its views as to the desirability of including the

Orange River Colony within its boundaries.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) No, sir; the reference to the Committee will not permit of such evidence being given.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Wages of Sheffield Armour-Plate Makers.

MR. MACPHERSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that certain armour-plate makers in the Sheffield district, engaged upon Government work, are at the present time paying less than the recognised trade union rates, particularly in the melting department; and what action he proposes to take.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): No complaints have been received on this point.

MR. MACPHERSON: If I supply the right hon. Gentleman with information privately will he inquire into it?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Undoubtedly, Sir.

H.M.S. "Britannia"—Beagling.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the sport of beagling, provided for the cadets of H.M.S. "Britannia," and partly paid for out of public funds, is regarded as cruel and degrading; and whether, in view of this, he will withhold any funds now applied to the up-keep of this form of sport, and otherwise use his influence to have a drag hunt substituted and thus make cadet exercise at home conform to that provided for cadets when being trained in Mediterranean ports.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I hope the hon. Member will allow me to postpone the Answer to this Question until the visit of the Board to Dartmouth, when it will be considered in consultation with the college authorities.

Rosyth.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when are the items composing the sum of £40,000, credited to the work at Rosyth, due to be expended during 1906–7.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to a similar Question put by the hon. and gallant Member on the 8th instant.†

Keyham Extension Works.

*MR. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the contractor for the Keyham extension works was under contract to use British granite; and that he was subsequently permitted to use granite imported from Norway; and, if so, whether the original contract price was altered by the permission to use Norwegian granite.

MR. LAMBERT: The contract for the Keyham Dockyard extension did not stipulate that British granite was to be used; and the contractor was therefore entitled to use foreign granite provided its quality was satisfactory.

St. Helena Garrison.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed to withdraw the troops from St. Helena during the year 1906–7; and when the evacuation is to begin.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire): It is proposed to withdraw the troops from St. Helena during the year 1906–7, but the date of the evacuation has not yet been settled.

Crimean and Indian Mutiny Pensions.

MR. W. H. DAVIES (Bristol, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he proposes to agree to the prayer of the petition on behalf of the Crimean and Indian Mutiny veterans, which was presented to his predecessor in office, and which asked that the pensions of these old soldiers, now generally over seventy years of age, should be, when below 1s. per day, augmented to that sum.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cliii., 614.

MR. HALDANE: This matter is still under consideration.

Rewards for Arresting Deserters.

MR. WILKIE (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether from ten to fifteen shillings is paid by way of reward to any person arresting a deserter; and, if so, will he say why only half of the amount is paid to police constables.

MR. HALDANE: These rewards may be paid to any person for apprehending a deserter in plain clothes. In fixing the amount of the reward the officer commanding is guided by the recommendation of the committing magistrate. The regulations do not differentiate between police constables and others.

Barry and Buddon Camps Meat Contracts.

MR. WILKIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the contracts for butchers' meat, supplied to the Barry and Buddon Camps, are open to the tradesmen of Dundee and Forfarshire; and, if so, will he see that an opportunity is given to the butchers of Dundee and district to compete for the same.

MR. HALDANE: No eligible firms are excluded from tendering for War Department contracts. The tradesmen in question should apply to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Scottish Command, for the necessary forms.

Army Recruitment.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many recruits have joined the regular infantry for the four months, 1st November to 1st March; and whether he can state how many are required per annum in order to keep up the establishment.

MR. HALDANE: The total infantry recruits for the period specified, excluding Colonials, amounted to 7,393. The reply to the latter part of the Question depends upon establishments and terms of service which are at present under consideration. I am not, therefore, at present able to state a figure.

*MR. BELLAIRS: Is the number less than the numbers obtained in previous years?

MR. HALDANE: I should say so on the whole.

Lancashire Royal Field Artillery.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in 1901, under the title of the Lancashire Royal Field Artillery, the experiment was tried of forming a brigade of three batteries of field artillery, of which one-third consisted of Regulars, who formed the permanent nucleus of the brigade, and two-thirds of Militia, who came up for two months training annually; whether this brigade is still in existence; and, if so, what have been the results of the experiment as regards both gunnery and general military effectiveness; and what is its annual cost as compared with the cost of a brigade of Royal Field Artillery.

MR. HALDANE: The brigade to which the hon. and gallant Member alludes is still in existence. The reports have been satisfactory, especially in view of the amount of training received. The annual cost of the brigade is £21,000, and of a brigade of Royal Field Artillery on the lower establishment is £40,000.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Is it proposed to continue this experiment?

MR. HALDANE: At this moment we have no intention of making any change, the whole question is, however, under consideration.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Is it not the case that for years the statements on the Estimates have not corresponded with the facts? Do they do so again this year? Was there not money taken for a much larger body than was kept up?

MR. HALDANE: As my right hon. friend knows, there is very often a discrepancy, but we are endeavouring to put the thing into shape.

Canadian Coasting Trade and the United States.

LORD HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): On behalf of the hon. Member for Gravesend, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the statement made by the Canadian Prime Minister, in the Dominion House of Commons, on 26th March, that Canada has offered the United States reciprocity in the coasting trade with Canada, but that the offer so far had not been received with favour; whether he will give the House details of the offer and the reply; and state what provisions were made in the offer for safeguarding the interests of British shipping under any such reciprocal arrangement.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The Secretary of State has seen a telegraphic report in the Press of the statement to which the hon. Member refers; he understands that the Prime Minister of the Dominion spoke of an offer made to the United States several years ago. The notice of his Question given by the hon. Member has not been sufficient to enable the Department to make the necessary research, but if he will repeat his Question after the Easter recess I hope to be able to give him the information he desires.

St. Helena Garrison.

*MR. HICKS BEACH: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will lay upon the Table any representations of the inhabitants of the Island of St. Helena as to the proposed withdrawal of troops from the island.

MR. CHURCHILL: As I informed the hon. Member in reply to his Question of the 27th instant, [†] no such representations have as yet been received, except the telegram from the Governor, the purport of which was fully stated in my Answer.

*MR. HICKS BEACH asked if the representations, should they be received, would be laid on the Table?

MR. CHURCHILL said that the Government must first have an opportunity of examining them.

British Indian Nomenclature.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in future, in official records and documents, such nomenclature can be adopted as will avoid the common classification of our civilised British Indian fellow-subjects with African races upon an altogether different plane of civilisation.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State is not aware that there has been failure in the past to preserve the distinction between educated and civilised British Indians and the uncivilised members of African races, and His Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of maintaining the discrimination.

Johannesburg Mines.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a resolution has been received from the trades council of Johannesburg in which the Government are warned of a threat of the mineowners to close down the mines and suspend construction work, with a view of coercing the people to support the mining magnates in introducing an unlimited number of Chinese; and, if so, what action, if any, the Government mean to take in regard to the matter.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have to refer the hon. Member to my Answer of yesterday.[‡]

Flogging in the Native Indian Army.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the orders for the total abolition of flogging in His Majesty's services will also be extended to His Majesty's Native Indian Army.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. JOHN MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I am advised that the punishment of flogging under the Indian Articles of War is not frequently resorted to in the Native Army. This is all the more reason why flogging should go, and I will communicate with the Government of India.

[†] See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1061.

[‡] See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 1260.

LORD HELMSLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask for a Return of the number of cases of flogging in the Indian Army, together with the offences for which the punishment was inflicted?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I will consider that.

Sale of Drugs to Children in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of Madras have decided to prohibit the sale of liquor, opium, or other intoxicating drugs to persons under fourteen years of age; whether he is aware that a similar prohibition prevails in Bombay; and whether it is intended to adopt the same regulation in all the other provinces of India.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am sorry to say that I have no information as to any decision of the Madras Government, nor whether it is intended to adopt a similar regulation in other provinces. The Excise Committee recently appointed by the Government of India has been instructed to report on the question of prohibiting the sale of liquor to children. I think it advisable to await their report.

Seistan Water Channels Award.

MR. T. HART-DAVIES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Persian Government has refused to accept Colonel MacMahon's award regarding the Seistan water channels; and, if so, whether, under treaty, it is obligatory on Persia to accept such an award; and what steps it is proposed to take in the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Persian Government have refused to accept Colonel MacMahon's award. Under the arrangement come to in November, 1902, it was agreed that if the Persian Government did not accept the award, the question should be referred to the final decision of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The Persian Government have now been requested to submit a reasoned statement of their objections to the award.

Flogging of Natives at Hankow.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the report of the superintendent of police of Hankow to the British Municipal Council of Hankow, for the year ending 31st December, 1905, from which it appears that during the year 514 persons charged with various offences were flogged with bamboos, and seventy-six persons were tortured with the cangue; whether such punishments are allowed by the British Consuls on concessions in China; and what steps, if any, His Majesty's Government intend to take for the purpose of stopping them.

SIR EDWARD GREY: We have not got the report referred to. Jurisdiction over Chinese subjects for offences which do not concern a British subject is not exercised by British Consuls. Such cases come before a Chinese magistrate appointed by the Taotai. The Vice-Consul sits with him as assessor, but if the offences are serious the accused persons are remitted to the Chinese city magistrate outside the concession. I assume that the sentences referred to were given by Chinese authorities.

MR. H. H. MARKS: I will furnish the right hon. Gentleman with a copy of the report.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I shall be glad to receive a copy of the report, but it will not help me unless I know under what authorities the sentences were given.

Development of Persia.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have opened, or propose to open, negotiations with the Russian Government for an amicable understanding which will secure the territorial integrity and develop the industrial resources of Persia.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I cannot say more than that in this, as in other cases in which British interests are concerned as well as those of another Power, we keep the open door for an amicable understanding.

Returns of Steel Imports.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will, for the convenience of British rail manufacturers, give directions that, in lieu of the present practice of giving all imported steel rails in one class, the classification of imported steel rails in the official Returns shall be as follows, new perfect rails and conductor rails for steam or electric traction, defective rails, and tram rails.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): It is too late to alter the form and scope of the Returns to be issued during 1906, but the suggestions contained in the Question shall be placed before the Departmental Committee for the Revision of the Trade Accounts at its next annual meeting, which will be held in the autumn.

Alien Pilots.

LORD HELMSLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for Gravesend, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now state whether he is prepared to include a clause dealing with alien pilots in the Merchant Shipping Bill.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I had hoped to be in a position to give an answer on the question of the grant of pilotage certificates to aliens to-day, but I have not yet received the law officers' opinion. I must, therefore, ask the hon. Member to postpone his Question for a few days.

New Spanish Tariff.

LORD HELMSLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for Gravesend, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table the draft of the new Spanish tariff, to come into force on the 1st July, indicating how the proposed new duties compare with those now in force.

I beg also, on the same hon. Member's behalf, to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether representations have been received from Chambers of Commerce or individual manufacturers as to the probable effect upon British exports of the new Spanish tariff to come into force on the 1st July; what recommendations the Commercial Intelligence Committee have made; and what steps His Majesty's Government have taken, and with what result.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The new Spanish tariff has not yet been published, but we are in communication with Chambers of Commerce confidentially on the subject through the Board of Trade Advisory Committee on Commercial Intelligence. The matter is being carefully watched.

Underground Cable to Scotland.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the underground telegraph line from London to Scotland has yet been completed, and when it will be open for the public use.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The line is complete, and large sections of it are already in use. The whole is available for use at any moment in case of a breakdown of the overhead wires.

South African Committee of Inquiry—Cost.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the anticipated cost of the South African Commission of Inquiry; if provision has been specially made for it in the Vote for Commissions and Committees; and when the Vote in question will come up for discussion.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I am not aware that an estimate has yet been framed of the cost of this Committee, which will, of course, depend on the duration of the inquiry. No specific provision has been made for this service in the Vote for Temporary Commissions, but the Vote includes a considerable unallocated sum which is applicable to Commissions not specifically provided for. It is impossible to say when the Vote will come up for discussion.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Can the hon. Gentleman inform me what remuneration has been paid to members of the Committee?

Mr. McKENNA: I am not aware that anything has been paid.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: Or will be?

Mr. McKENNA asked for notice of that Question.

Conventual and Monastic Property.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, considering the financial question involved, he proposes to take any steps to ascertain how far the property of conventual and monastic institutions is held by individuals, and not by properly constituted trusts.

Mr. McKENNA: I have no means of obtaining information on the subject.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: Will the hon. Gentleman take means, or endeavour to take means, to find out?

Mr. McKENNA: I cannot endeavour to take means, when we have no means.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Has not this question arisen in the Channel Islands, and have not the authorities in the Channel Islands obtained exactly the information which the hon. Gentleman says he cannot obtain?

Mr. McKENNA: I must beg the right hon. Gentleman to give notice of that Question.

Stemmed Tobacco.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the decrease in the quantity of stemmed tobacco imported into this country from 98,000,000 lbs. in 1902 to 11,000,000 lbs. in 1905, and the increase in unstemmed tobacco from 27,000,000 lbs. to 72,000,000 lbs. during the same period; and if he will inquire as to whether the present duty on stemmed tobacco is of a protective character, with a view to its early modification.

Mr. McKENNA: The figures quoted by the hon. Member as to the imports of stemmed and unstemmed tobacco respectively in 1902 and 1905 are the correct quantities (in round figures) as given in the Trade Returns. In reply to the second Question, I may say that the matter is receiving careful consideration.

Duty on Foreign Spirits.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the decline in the quantity of foreign spirits used for methylation since the year 1902–3, and the small proportion of such spirits used in arts and manufactures under the provisions of the Finance Act of 1902; whether these results are due to the protective character of the present differential duty; what percentage *ad valorem* duty the 2d. per proof gallon difference between the amount of import duty and export allowance represents; and whether, having regard to the great importance of a cheap supply of industrial alcohol, he will consider the advisability of reducing the import duty on foreign spirits to 3d. per proof gallon, the equivalent of the export allowance on similar spirits.

Mr. McKENNA: The quantity of foreign spirit used for methylation in the year 1902–3 was altogether abnormal. The large consumption took place in spite of the increase of the surtax to 5d., which was imposed in April, 1902, and was due to an excess in the supplies of German spirit, which reduced the price to about 6d. per gallon. The decline since 1902–3 in the quantity used for methylation, and other purposes, has resulted, not from the operation of the surtax, but from an increase in the price of German spirit, which a year ago was treble what it was in 1902–3, and is still more than double. These wide fluctuations of price make it impossible to state generally what percentage *ad valorem* the difference of 2d. in the surtax represents. The question of the conditions under which alcohol should be procurable for industrial purposes was examined and reported upon by a Departmental Committee a year ago, and their recommendations were embodied in the Revenue Bill which was brought in last session. The present Government hope to be able to introduce legislation on the subject at an early date.

Oxford Municipal Charities.

Lord VALENTIA (Oxford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Elland

Division, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether the Commissioners have considered the scheme, forwarded, at their suggestion, on 1st December, 1905, by the trustees of the Oxford Municipal Charities; and, if so, whether they will be good enough to signify their approval, if approved, before the end of this month, for submission to the April meeting of the trustees.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): The recommendations of the trustees are under consideration, and a draft scheme is in course of preparation, for the purpose of determining the part of the endowment applicable to solely educational purposes, in which the recommendations will be followed so far as possible; but the Commissioners cannot signify any general approval until after communication with the Board of Education, and publication of the draft scheme.

Lochs School Board, Island of Lewis.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that the election of a school board for the parish of Lochs, Island of Lewis, recently failed through the notice of the election not being posted on the school door sufficiently early to admit of the nomination papers reaching the returning officers by the date specified, will he ascertain why the returning officer has not reported the failure of the election; and will instructions be given for a fresh election.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The returning officer has now reported to the Scotch Education Department that no election has taken place, inasmuch as the number of candidates nominated for election and not withdrawn was less than the number to be elected. The Department is now taking steps with a view to nominate a full board, but if that is found to be impracticable a fresh election will be ordered.

*MR. WEIR asked if the right hon. Gentleman would make further inquiry as to the gross irregularities mentioned in the first part of his Question?

MR. SINCLAIR: Yes, Sir.

Island of Lewis Police Superintendent.

*MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the superintendent of police for the Island of Lewis fills the combined offices of sanitary inspector, borough surveyor, and sampling officer under the Food and Drugs Act; and, having regard to the insanitary condition of the Lews, as disclosed in Dr. Dittmar's Report, will care be taken that the appointment of sanitary inspector is not given to anyone whose time is largely occupied in the duties of other offices.

MR. SINCLAIR: The facts are as stated. The precautions suggested by the hon. Member in regard to any new appointment are present to the Local Government Board and will certainly be borne in mind.

Royal Burghs and Royal Accessions.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether inquiry has been made upon the memorial and statement for the Royal Burghs of Scotland, dated 31st December, 1902, anent the claims of the Royal Burghs to proclaim the accession of Sovereigns within Burghs Royal; what stage the inquiry has presently arrived at; and when a decision may be expected.

MR. SINCLAIR: I propose to ask the Lyon King at Arms for his opinion upon a special point, and when his reply is received I hope that a decision may be possible.

Grangemouth Shooting Fatality.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that on the 14th December last, during the performance of a juvenile musical piece in the Town Hall of Grangemouth, a girl, Annie Grey, aged thirteen and-a-half years, was fatally wounded by a bullet from a revolver fired by Donald Stewart, stage carpenter, and died the following night in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary; whether a public inquiry was immediately made by the procurator fiscal, and, if not, will he say why this was not done; whether he will explain why the Crown authorities, after dropping the charge of culpable homicide against Stewart, decided to charge him with the offence of reckless discharge of firearms, and eventually dropped that charge; whether any inquiry has been made to ascertain how and by whose authority loaded firearms were permitted to be brought on to the stage among children; and whether he will now direct the prosecution of Stewart on the charge of reckless use of firearms, or what steps does he intend to take in this matter.

MR. SINCLAIR: Very careful inquiry has been made into the death of this girl, from which it appears that it occurred under the following circumstances: An amateur play was performed on 14th December, 1905, in the Town Hall, Grangemouth, and a young man named Donald Stewart was employed as stage carpenter. Part of the piece was the firing of some shots, and this was entrusted to Stewart, who was supplied with a revolver and four blank cartridges. At the rehearsal three of these were discharged, and to replace them Stewart called at an ironmonger's shop and bought five cartridges. He says that he asked for blank cartridges and understood that he had been supplied with these. At least one of the cartridges, however, was a ball cartridge, and upon its being fired, the deceased, who was behind a curtain and scenery, was found to have been shot in the back of the neck. She died next day. Crown counsel carefully investigated the facts and came to the conclusion that the cause of death was accidental, and that there was no justifiable reason for Stewart's prosecution on a criminal charge. The Secretary for Scotland is aware of the desire for a public inquiry into cases of such accidents and of sudden and suspicious deaths and of the dissatisfaction at the working of the Fatal Accidents Enquiry Act, and the Lord-Advocate has been asked to consider the whole subject with a view to possible legislation.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): Cannot something be done to the person supplying the cartridges?

MR. SINCLAIR: That was one of the matters carefully considered.

MR. SMEATON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of urging a reform of the law in Scotland?

MR. SINCLAIR: I have already said that that is being considered.

Dingwall and Cromarty Light Railway.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what progress has been made with the Dingwall and Cromarty Light Railway.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Board of Trade have communicated both with the Cromarty and Dingwall Light Railway Company and the Highland Railway Company on this subject, and they are informed that the latter company, who under the Light Railway Order are to construct the railway, have undertaken the survey and preparation of the working plans of the line prior to the commencement of the work. It is stated that the survey, which was commenced in December last, is almost finished, and would, with the plans, have been completed before now but for the severe weather.

Roxborough Road Schools, Limerick.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he has had any communications recently from the borough council of Limerick with regard to the Roxborough Road Schools in that city; and, if so, whether he will state generally the purport of these communications and lay them, with his answers, upon the Table of the House.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I received a letter from the town clerk of Limerick, dated the 27th February, 1906, applying to me as Attorney-General to commence legal proceedings to secure for the city of Limerick the property referred to. I replied to this letter that I should inquire into the matter as soon as possible. I find that legal proceedings in reference to this school have been going on for a considerable time, and that the matter is a very complicated one, though the property involved is small in value. I do not think that the matter is of sufficient general interest to justify me in laying the correspondence upon the Table of the House.

MR. JOYCE: To whom does this property belong?

Mr. CHERRY was unable to reply to that by way of Question and Answer.

Mr. JOYCE: Will you make full inquiry?

Mr. CHERRY: I have promised to do so.

Estates Commissioners' Staff.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland will he lay upon the Table of the House, or furnish all Members desiring it, a list of applicants, including those for reappointment, for the position of lay sub-commissioner, land valuer, and inspector for the Estates Commissioners, respectively, with their respective postal addresses.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The Answer is in the negative. It would be entirely contrary to practice to publish the information asked for.

Administration of the Irish Land Acts—Qualifications of Officials.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, having regard to the common requirement of specific knowledge for service in State Departments in Great Britain, and the result of this requirement, he will consider the advisability of introducing the same principle into Ireland, beginning with the departments engaged in fixing rents and prices of land, and requiring some practical experience as rent-paying farmers as an essential qualification of all candidates for the positions of lay sub-commissioner, land valuer, and inspector for the Estates Commissioners respectively.

Mr. BRYCE: The qualifications required are prescribed in the Statutory Rules of 13th March, 1899. Practical experience of the value of land is one of those qualifications, and a most important one, but I should be sorry to limit the range of choice so long as ample evidence of practical capacity is furnished.

Mr. Montgomery's Killucan Estate.

Mr. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mr. A. V. Montgomery offered, ten years ago, to sell his interest to his tenants at Riverdale, Killucan, at twenty years purchase of the rents, no bonus being then available, and that he now offers to sell, under the Land Act of 1903, the same interest to the same tenants at more than twenty-seven years purchase, which, with the bonus added, exceeds thirty years' purchase of the rents, or an increase of ten years purchase on his former demand; and whether he proposes to take any steps, by legislation or otherwise, to deal with such cases.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that no proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them, and that they have no knowledge of the matters alleged in the Question.

Expenditure on Labourers' Cottage Schemes.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the £40,000 from the Exchequer contribution to Ireland available for labourers' cottages during the last financial year has been appropriated and spent upon such cottages; and, if not, how much of it has been so expended; in what proportion amongst the different provinces; and if he will state where the balance is, and how it is intended to be applied.

Mr. BRYCE: The calculations in respect of the grant in question for the year ending 31st inst., are at present being made by the Local Government Board, and until these are completed the information asked for is not available.

Irish National Teachers as Farmers.

Mr. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is any breach of the regulations controlling the appointment of national teachers in Ireland that they should also own and work farms, particularly if these be farms from which former tenants were evicted.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that there is no rule in their code relating to the ownership or working of farms by national teachers. Teachers are not permitted to carry on or engage in any business or occupation that would impair their usefulness as teachers.

Edenderry—Alleged Disturbance.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an attack made upon an Orange band when passing through Edenderry, Portadown, on 3rd March, in which a number of bandsmen were very roughly handled; whether the names of those committing this attack were taken by the police; and, if so, whether a prosecution will follow.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the police authorities that there was no semblance of interference with the band which passed through Edenderry on the 3rd March. Edenderry is stated to be an exclusively Orange locality. The hon. Member has evidently been misinformed.

Irish Consultative Agricultural Committee.

* Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many meetings have been held by the consultative committee established, under Section 23 of The Agriculture and Technical Instruc- (Ireland) Act, 1899, for the purpose of co-ordinating educational administration; when did this committee meet last; and can he state what it has done.

Mr. BRYCE: The consultative committee for co-ordinating educational administration has met on five occasions, the last meeting having been held on 19th June, 1905. A statement of the work of the committee will appear in the forthcoming annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction which will shortly be presented to Parliament, and I would ask the hon. Member to await the appearance of that Report.

Permanent Inspectors of Schools.

* Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by whom was the decision given which was communicated by the Lord-Lieutenant to the Intermediate Commissioner in the year 1904, to the effect that permanent inspectors of the schools were not to be appointed until the parts which inspection and examination should respectively play in the distribution of State aid to intermediate schools had been determined; whether he is aware that the chairman and vice-chairman of the Board of Intermediate Education are the Lord Chief Baron and Mr. Justice Madden, and that, in the face of the decision above referred to, these Judges signed a Report which states that the absence of inspection of the intermediate schools is a violation of the statutory obligations imposed by the Act of 1900, and that the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury and the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland are responsible for that violation of the law; and whether, seeing that the Intermediate Commissioners have been appealing year after year to the Government, in the interest of education, to permit the appointment of permanent inspectors, he will take some immediate steps to end this state of things in the interests of schools and education in Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: The decision referred to in the first part of the Question was the act of the Irish Government. I am aware that the Board of Intermediate Education in their annual Report for 1905 expressed the opinion that the Irish Government and the Treasury had failed to fulfil the obligations imposed on them by the Act of 1900 in regard to the inspection of intermediate schools. It must, however, be remembered that what the Irish Government in the time of my predecessors did was to refuse their approval to the appointment of permanent as distinct from temporary inspectors, and the Government still considers it undesirable to create fresh vested interests in a department which may be the subject of some change. The matter will continue to receive my attention, but I am unable to make any definite statement on the subject at present.

Kavanagh Estate Evicted Tenants.

Mr. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether representations have been made to the Estates Commissioners on behalf of Martin Loughton or his relatives, evicted tenants, for reinstatement to his holding on the Kavanagh estate, Ballyragget, county Kilkenny; and, if so, what steps the Commissioners have taken in the matter.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have received an application for reinstatement on behalf of Martin Loughlin who is stated to reside in America. From inquiries which have been made, it would appear that the holding in respect of which his claim is made is at present in the occupation of three new tenants. No steps have been taken by the Commissioners in regard to the reinstatement of Martin Loughlin.

Castlecomer Coal Mining Industry.

Mr. MEAGHER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the coal-mining industry in the vicinity of Castlecomer, in the county of Kilkenny, and to the want of railway facilities, by which the industry is hampered; and whether, in view of the applications repeatedly made to the Irish Government for financial aid for the construction of a railway in connection with the existing railway lines, he can see his way to recommend a grant for this purpose, only about eight miles of a line of railway will connect the mines with all the Irish railways.

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that repeated applications have been made to the Irish Government for financial assistance in establishing railway communication with the Castlecomer coal fields, but that the funds which have been provided for railway extension in Ireland have been devoted to meeting the claims of poorer and more isolated districts. I have already stated that the question of improving the light railway service and rendering these railways more serviceable for agricultural and other transport, is engaging my attention; but, as at present advised, I am disposed to think that the claims of the Castlecomer district to assistance are less strong than those of some other districts.

South Tipperary Untenanted Lands.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many owners of untenanted lands in South Tipperary have been approached by the Estates Commissioners with the object of purchasing the lands; whether they have succeeded in purchasing many such farms; and, if not, whether he will state the cause.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that proceedings are pending for the purchase by them of 1,461 acres of untenanted land the property of E. Downes Martin, and of 305 acres the property of T. L. Atthill. The Commissioners have purchased fifty acres on the estate of Mrs. Gaussen; and two other owners have refused the Commissioners' offers for the purchase of 270 and forty-seven acres, respectively.

South Tipperary Evicted Tenants.

Mr. CULLINAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many landlords in South Tipperary, having evicted farms on their own hands, have been approached by the Estates Commissioners with the object of purchase; in how many cases they have succeeded; in how many cases they have failed, and why; how many evicted farms are in the hands of grabbers; and how many have been similarly approached, and with what result.

Mr. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that five landowners in county Tipperary have been approached by them on behalf of evicted tenants, and their replies are awaited. In one case the owner has stated his willingness to permit an inspector to visit the lands for the purpose of inquiring into the particular case, and the lands will be inspected in due course. It is believed that there are about 129 farms now occupied in county Tipperary, from which the former holders were at some time or other evicted. The Estates Commissioners are, however, not empowered to approach tenants in the actual occupation of holdings.

Mr. CULLINAN: May I ask if in any single case a landlord has accepted an offer by the Commissioners?

Mr. BRYCE: I have no information on that point.

Captain Caldbeck's Queen's County Estate.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Captain Caldbeck, Ballacolla, Queen's County, is before the Estates Commissioners for sale; and, if so, whether regard will be had, in the distribution of the untenanted land, to the requirements of the small holders and labourers in the locality, who have memorialised the Commissioners in the matter.

MR. BRYCE: The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings for the sale of this estate have been instituted before them, and that their inspector has been directed to report upon the estate. The memorial which has been received will be duly considered when the question of distributing the untenanted land is being dealt with by the Commissioners.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is there anything in the Act of 1903 or in the regulations to prevent the Estates Commissioners entering into negotiations with the new tenants? Have they not power to provide them with holdings elsewhere, or even to buy out their interest?

MR. BRYCE: I am advised there is nothing in the Act which empowers them to take that course, or to negotiate directly with the tenants

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S): Is there anything in the Act which prohibits them doing so?

MR. BRYCE: I do not think there is. But in the construction of an Act of Parliament we have to consider what the intention of Parliament was.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that during the discussions on the Bill in the House it was repeatedly stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, the then Chief Secretary, that the Estates Commissioners would have the power of buying out the interests of the new tenants?

MR. BRYCE: The reports of the debates are not before me, and my attention has not been drawn to this point. But it is clearly a question of the construction of the Act. I cannot give a legal opinion.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the passages in the debate to which I have referred.

Adair Estate Evicted Tenant.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an application for reinstatement has been received from Thomas Flanagan, Clonaghadoe, who was evicted from a farm on the Adair estate, near Mountmellick, in 1884; and whether, as the estate has since been sold to the tenants, and Flanagan's farm is in the occupation of a planter, he can say what steps the Estates Commissioners propose to take in this case.

MR. BRYCE: I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The Commissioners have ascertained that portion of the estate in question was sold to the tenants under the Land Purchase Acts some ten years ago, and that the owner retained certain untenanted lands in her own possession. On being approached with a view to the settlement of Flanagan's case, the owner's agent informed the Commissioners that she was not prepared to take the action requested.

Galway City and the Cost of Pauper Lunatics.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolutions adopted by various bodies in Ireland with respect to the charge upon the local rates incurred by reason of the upkeep of pauper lunatics in the asylums; whether he is aware that, in the case of Galway city and county, where the population can ill afford to bear heavy taxation, the cost of the maintenance of the county asylum exceeds the sum of £24,000 per annum; and whether, as the practice exists in other countries, it is possible to transfer this contribution to the general Government.

MR. BRYCE: I have received various resolutions upon this subject. I am informed that a sum amounting approximately to £24,000 will be required in the coming financial year to meet the cost of maintaining the Galway city and county patients in the local district lunatic asylum. It is, however, to be borne in mind that a sum amounting to £8,800 will be contributed out of the Local Taxation Grant towards the cost in question. I have stated in reply to previous Questions that the system under which the Government contributes to the support of the lunatic poor is the same in Ireland as in England, and that there is no intention to introduce separate legislation on the subject for Ireland.

Irish Legislation.

Mr. FINCH (Rutland): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names of the Bills he proposes to introduce during the present session.

Mr. BRYCE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply to his similar Question on February 27th.†

School Attendance in Ireland,

Mr. LIDDELL (Down, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what proportion of children in Ireland attend elementary schools on the average of two-and-a-half, three and four hours per day, respectively.

Mr. BRYCE: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that they have no sufficient information nor could exact statistics be obtained of the number of children in national schools who attend, on the average, two-and-a-half, three and four hours daily, respectively. Senior pupils should under the rules receive at least three-and-a-half hours secular instruction daily, for five days in the week; and junior pupils, that is, pupils under eight years of age, should receive two-and-a-half hours instruction. This rule does not apply to "half-time" pupils, of whom there were 1,675 when the latest Return was prepared.

Irish School Building Grants.

Mr. LIDDEL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is proposed to make a grant towards improving the elementary school buildings in Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE: Provision will be made in the Estimates for a grant sufficient for the ensuing year.

Irish Land Stock.

Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing the delay in completing purchases under the Land Act of 1903, the sales under it having already exceeded £30,000,000 sterling, and seeing that, as at present arranged, only £5,000,000 sterling are annually available for the purposes of the Act, he will, in order to pay for purchases already arranged and to encourage further purchases, represent to His Majesty's Treasury the necessity for arranging that £10,000,000 of stock be issued annually so long as may be necessary.

Mr. BRYCE: £10,000,000 of stock will be raised in the coming year if necessary.

Deceased Soldiers Estates—Case of John Duggan.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the application of Patrick Duggan, of Galway, for the gratuity due to his son John Duggan, of the Sutherland Highlanders, who had served in the South African War, and, as a result of the wounds there received, died shortly after his return; and whether, in view of Patrick Duggan's age and poverty, he will issue instructions to have any amounts still due paid without delay.

Mr. HALDANE: My attention has been drawn to this case. There is no sum remaining due to Mr. Duggan on account of his son's estate, and he was so informed on the 17th instant.

Publication of Minister's Speeches.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the reprint and wide circulation of Lord Milner's recent speech, and of the present channels of information between the two countries, he will consider the advisability of making known in South Africa the speech of the Lord Chancellor on the same occasion, by recommending to the various Governments of that country the adoption of the means of securing publicity, so frequently taken in France, by placarding that speech in South Africa, in the interests of peace and civilisation.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clii., 1033.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I do not think that in such a matter it would be desirable to interfere with the various Governments; and I am not ready to recommend the plan adopted in France of placarding important speeches. I do not know where we should stop.

South African Committee and Chinese Labour.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Committee of Inquiry which is to proceed to South Africa will investigate the question of Chinese indentured labour, with a view to advising the Government as to how far its maintenance is necessary to the development and prosperity of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I answered a somewhat similar Question yesterday.† The matter the hon. Member refers to is quite beyond the scope of the inquiry.

Crofter Acts.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will arrange to have the promised Crofters Acts Amendment Bill introduced before Easter, so that those especially concerned may have an opportunity of considering the Bill during the recess.

SIR H CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A similar Question was answered only three days ago,‡ and I think the hon. Member had better await the reply to another Question of the same kind which my hon. friend the Member for Ross-shire has put down for Monday.

Constitution of the South African Committee.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that of the four members of the Committee appointed by His Majesty's Government to inquire into certain matters in South Africa, preparatory to granting self-government to the Transvaal, one, Lord Sandhurst, has held office in a Liberal Administration, as Under-Secretary of State for War, when the present First Lord of the Treasury was head of that Department, and that another member of the Committee, Sir West Ridgway, was the Liberal candidate for the City of London, at the recent General Election; and whether, having regard to the fact that the matters into which the Committee will inquire and upon which they will report are political in their character, he will consider the desirability of appointing a fresh Committee with a non-political personnel.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is nothing political in the character of the Committee. Its members deserve, and, I doubt not, will receive the public confidence.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Is it not the fact that two of the gentlemen on the Committee are notorious and avowed partisans of the Government?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Was not the right hon. Gentleman who asks this Question himself a member of a political Commission which was sent out by his Government to South Africa and with but little result, or no result whatever?

[No Answer was made.]

Rules of Procedure.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the House will be allowed to express a perfectly free and independent opinion on the question of the day of the week on which the short sitting should be held.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think this is desirable, and it will be made clear when the proposed alterations in the rules are considered.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) asked whether there would be an opportunity of discussing a time limit for speeches on Monday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that this subject would not arise on the part of the question of procedure which the Committee had dealt with. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman would communicate with the Chairman of the Committee, no doubt he would give an opportunity for embracing that subject in some other portion of the Committee's inquiry. Until the Committee had reported on it, the matter could hardly come before the House.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clv., 1290.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cliv., 875.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the new Procedure Rules will be discussed.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On Monday.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the proposals of the Government, as conveyed to the Select Committee of Procedure, will be laid upon the Table of the House; and whether private Members will be allowed to submit themselves for examination by the Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: These proposals are on the Paper. I do not know what the nature or the purpose of the proposed examination of private Members may be; but the Committee has concluded its deliberation on the branch of the general subject which will be dealt with on Monday.

South African Committee—Terms of Reference.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will consent to lay upon the Table any correspondence which may have passed between His Majesty's Government and the South African Committee or its Chairman, in order to remove all element of doubt as to the meaning of the terms of the instructions.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The letter to the Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry which has been laid on the Table is the only Paper that can be produced, and it contains all the information that can be required.

AN HON. MEMBER: Have any additional instructions been given to the Chairman.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir, not that I am aware of.

Maintenance of Irish Pauper Lunatics.

*MR. CHARLES McVEIGH (Donegal, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Donegal, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the resolutions of the Ballinasloe, Donegal, and other district asylum committees, having reference to the cost of maintenance of pauper lunatics; and whether he can see his way to introduce legislation making this charge payable out of Imperial funds.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland has already stated that the Government have no intention of introducing legislation on this matter, and I have nothing to add to that.

South African New Constitution—The Committee and the Residents.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the South African Committee will be entitled to receive evidence as to the desire of the residents of the Transvaal as to the degree of full self-government, and the contemplated restrictions on the colony, as proposed under the new scheme of Government.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not quite understand the hon. Member's Question, but I can see enough to tell him that the questions he apparently has in his mind have nothing to do with the inquiry.

Transvaal Redistribution Scheme.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the South African Committee will be at liberty to recommend a variation of the number of constituencies in the Transvaal, or if, by the terms of their reference, they are bound to act upon the decision that there shall be sixty constituencies precisely.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the hon. Member will turn to paragraph three of the letter of instructions, he will see that the Committee are not bound by any hard and fast lines. The words to which I may call his attention are, "to consider and report on any proposal for the representation of urban or rural districts respectively, other than the division into single-membered electoral divisions." That disposes of the idea that the only basis of investigation is that of the sixty single-membered constituencies.

Colonial Marriage Law.

MR. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the interest felt in the Colonies in the proposed measure for improving the law regarding certain Colonial marriages, he is able to state when this measure will be introduced.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Bill as to which the hon. Member inquires is in course of preparation. I am afraid it can hardly be introduced before Easter, but he may be sure that there will be no undue delay.

Afforestation.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the inquiries already made by the Select Committee on Forestry in 1885, 1886, and 1887, and by the Departmental Committee on British Forestry in 1902, and also the series of elaborate Reports on Forestry in Foreign Countries, he will state for what purpose it is now proposed to refer the subject of afforestation to a new Committee or Commission; and whether he can see his way to take efficient action in regard to this subject without further inquiry.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade stated last Monday in answer to a Question, it has been definitely decided that the question of afforestation will not be included in the reference to the proposed Commission, which is to confine its attention to coast erosion. I agree with my hon. friend that we are already in possession of a very large amount of information on the subject of afforestation.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked for an Answer to the last part of his Question.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not as at present advised think further inquiry is necessary. I do not think any legislative action could be at present taken.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Administrative action?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Administrative action has been taken.

MR. KEIR HARDIE asked whether the recommendation of the Committee which sat over three years ago would now be carried out.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand a good deal has already been done, and we have in contemplation some steps to carry it still further.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE JUDGE-ADVOCATE-GENERAL—THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

MR. PAUL (Northampton) said he wished to put to the Prime Minister a Question with regard to public business. When the Army Annual Bill was read a third time that morning, before the Third Reading was agreed to, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, in the absence of the Prime Minister, gave him a distinct and positive pledge that he should have an early opportunity of raising in Committee of Supply, on the Vote for his own salary, an important constitutional question about the appointment and functions of the Judge-Advocate-General. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would implement his colleague's undertaking and state what was the earliest opportunity on which he could put down the Vote for the Secretary of State for War's salary.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that as his hon. friend had implied, he could not speak from his own hearing what promise was actually made. He had only received notice of the Question since he came into the House, and he had not had an opportunity of consulting his right hon. friend. He understood, however, that his hon. friend rather exaggerated the promise so far as it involved the use of the word "early." It had been suggested to him by the hon. Gentleman that the opportunity he desired could be afforded on the Vote for the salary of the Secretary of State for War, but he thought it would be very inconvenient to the House to put that down early, because it might preclude the possibility that ought to be retained of keeping the discussion of the Vote alive. It ought not to be taken prematurely in the public interest, as it was desirable to keep it open until near the end of the session, in view of any further desire to discuss Army questions.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) asked as to the business for the following week.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN replied that Monday would be devoted to the consideration of the Report on Procedure, and, in order to prevent inconvenience at the end, he thought it would be desirable to suspend the twelve o'clock rule—not with any cruel purpose at any rate. On Tuesday they would take the Second Reading of the Workmen's Compensation Bill, and on Wednesday other Bills on the Paper would be introduced.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said with regard to the debate on the Rules it might tend to the simplification of the discussion if the right hon. Gentleman would follow the precedent set on a former occasion, and allow them to have some latitude in the shape of a Second Reading debate in which they could deal with the application of the Rules generally. It would be rather difficult to discuss the whole question upon the various Amendments.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he quite appreciated the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman. As this was a question affecting the hours of sitting it was obvious that the debate should take a general course before they proceeded to discuss the individual questions involved.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he would not press the right hon. Gentleman further, but he was sure it would tend to a shortening of the discussion if hon. Members on both sides of the House were placed in the position he suggested. It was clear that the question raised would include that of the limitation of speeches to which reference had been made by the hon. and gallant Member for Chelmsford Division of Essex.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, we shall confine it to the question of hours.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he only asked that there should be some latitude allowed.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said there would be a Paper circulated shewing the general effect of the Amendments on the Paper. They appeared of a rather formidable character, but when they were examined it would be found that there were only one or two Amendments of main importance, the others are rather drafting Amendments.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND suggested that the Paper would be made more valuable if it included copies of the existing Standing Orders with the proposed Amendments marked upon them. He also asked whether the decision of the House with regard to the time of meeting and so forth would be taken without that pressure which was implied by the appointment of Government Whips. They would then be able to get the genuine feeling of the majority.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think that as the Government are responsible for the business in a measure which is not shared by the rest of the House it would not be possible to do what the hon. Gentleman suggests, except in regard to the subject of Wednesday and Friday sittings, on which there is so much difference of opinion. On that point the House will be left free.

Mr. SHACKLETON asked when the Workmen's Compensation Bill would be circulated.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I hope it will be in the hands of hon. Members this evening. At the latest it will be circulated tomorrow.

Mr. SHACKLETON: That is very short time.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he had no desire to place any obstacle in the way of taking the Bill before Easter, but he would point out that this very late delivery was most inconvenient.

* MR. GLADSTONE: There is no new principle so far as the Second Reading is concerned.

MR. PAUL said he wished to reiterate his statement that the Secretary of State for War distinctly promised him an early opportunity of raising this question with regard to the Judge Advocate-General. It was on that understanding that he withdrew his opposition to the Third Reading of the Bill and he would be very glad to know that on an early day he would be placed in a position to discuss the matter.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said he wished to point out to the Home Secretary that the Workmen's Compensation Bill did introduce a new principle, because it included seamen for the first time. He therefore hoped the Second Reading would be deferred until after Easter.

MR. HALDANE, replying to Mr. Paul, said he was careful to avoid using the word "early" or to give any pledge at the time. All he did state was that his hon. friend would have an opportunity of raising the point on the Vote for his salary, and he would be glad if he did so raise it.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure in respect of the Police (Superannuation) Bill:—Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Watson Rutherford, Mr. Dunne, Major Dunne, Mr. Dudley Ward, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Money, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Hay, Mr. Luke White, Mr. William Priestley, Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Ridsdale, and Dr. Shipman.

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Merchant Shipping Acts Amendment (No. 2) Bill:—Mr. Solicitor-General, Sir Christopher Furness, Mr. Guest, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Cairns, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Archibald Williamson, Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Mr. Lewis Haslam, Mr. Walter Rea, and Mr. Harry Marks.

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON further reported; That they had nominated the following Fifteen Members to serve on the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Dogs Bill:—Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Cochrane, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Winfrey, Mr. James Murray, Mr. Levy Lever, Mr. Menzies, Sir Robert Hobart, Lord Wodehouse, Mr. Weir, Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Brace, and Colonel Gardner.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEE).

Sir W. BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Land Tenure Bill:—Mr. Frank Edwards, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. John Johnson, Sir William Holland, and Mr. Wolff; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Lambert, Mr. Luttrell, Mr. Edward Strauss, Mr. Robert Price, and Mr. Walter Long.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

FACTORY AND WOKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in respect of Laundries," presented by Mr. Cameron Corbett; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Mr. Trevelyan; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 135.]

BUILDING LANDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To deal with Building Lands in Scotland," presented by Mr. Munro Ferguson; supported by Mr. Archibald Williamson, and Mr. Lamont; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 136.]

SMALL TENANTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of land in Scotland by Small Tenants," presented by Mr. Munro Ferguson; supported by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Eugene Wason; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137.]

CLERKS OF THE PEACE AND COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to Clerks of the Peace and Clerks of the County Council," presented by Mr. Luttrell; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Channing, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, and Sir Walter Foster; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 138.]

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

"To amend the Public Health Acts," presented by Sir James Woodhouse; supported by Mr. Harmood Banner, Mr. John William Wilson, Mr. Samuel Roberts, and Mr. Arthur Henderson; to be read a second time upon Thursday 26th April, and to be printed. [Bill 139.]

DEPUTY CLERKS OF THE PEACE BILL.

"To make better provision for the appointment of Deputy Clerks of the Peace in municipal boroughs," presented by Sir James Woodhouse; supported by Mr. Atherley Jones, Mr. Harmood-Banner, and Sir Benjamin Stone; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 26th April, and to be printed. [Bill 140.]

SUPLLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1906-7.

1. £490,000, Medical Establishment, Pay, etc.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said he need not, he hoped, apologise to the Committee for wishing to say a few words on this Vote; for it was one that always recalled the most exciting and certainly the most difficult period of his own Parliamentary experience, and he thought he would show to the Committee that something still remained to be said on the subject. He trusted that, in making his statement that had been so often quoted, that "he rejected all things that did not make for fighting efficiency," the right hon. Gentleman did not include in that category, or on the negative side of it, the Army Medical Service. Directly and indirectly the condition of the Army Medical Service had to do with fighting efficiency. Directly, if it was a good service, because it kept the soldier well; or if he was sick or wounded got him well to fight again. Indirectly because however brave a soldier was, the knowledge that if he got sick or wounded he would have the best treatment, could not fail to give an underlying strength, a sort of remote force, to that courage. They did not know, no one could estimate, how far the scenes which our soldiers had witnessed in some parts and places of the South African War in connection with medical deficiencies—the want of nursing, the want of doctors, the want of orderlies, even the want of shelter and food when suffering from sickness or wounds, might have tended to shake the nerves of those who felt that at any moment they might be added to that list. But here, he must be permitted to say what he had often said before, what he never said so plainly and strongly as at the time when some of his own friends seemed slow to understand his motives; that the system from which those deficiencies arose was not the monopoly or the fault of any one Party in the State. It had received the continuous and unhappy sanction of both Parties and of opposite Governments that succeeded one another; and if a great war had occurred with the Party opposite in office, no reasonable man could affirm that the lamentable results of that system which they witnessed in South Africa could have been avoided. And there was something more. A great deal had undoubtedly been done, and was done under the last Government, to remedy the defects which he had felt compelled to bring to public notice. It remained for the present Government to complete the work. The Committee would remember that in that heated controversy, three aims were kept in view. The first and most pressing was the amelioration of the conditions under which 20,000 sick and wounded soldiers were at that time lying in the military hospitals in South Africa. That aim was quickly secured, for immediately public attention was drawn to the matter a complete change took place in the hospitals concerned. The second aim was a permanent and organic reform of the Army Medical Service. That also was done by his right hon. friend who was no longer in this House—Mr. Brodrick. He might say that that Gentleman, however he might have been criticised for being in other respects a "reformer in a hurry," deserved great credit for the sincere and thorough manner in which he carried out the reform of the Army Medical Department. All the evils under this head to which he (the speaker) had from the first called attention, had been taken in hand one by one, and wisely dealt with. The Service was no longer undermanned; the pay of the Army medical officer had been increased; the obstacles to their studying their profession, and many other unjust disabilities to which they were subjected, and which he had urged in his letters to *The Times*, had been relieved or entirely removed; the principle of promotion by merit rather than by seniority had been introduced; female nursing in war time, against which the Department had at the beginning of the war had an unreasoning and obstinate prejudice, had been sanctioned and provided; and last but not least, a civilian medical element had been admitted into the control of the Department. These were large and admirable reforms. But there remained a third aim which from the first he put in the forefront of his contentions; that was, to give such an elasticity to the organisation of the Army Medical Service that if this country should unhappily be called on to engage in a great campaign, a carefully thought-out scheme should be in existence and in working order to call to the aid of the Army the great civilian service, and to utilise it to the best advantage. Only when they had such a scheme would they be able to feel confident that it was impossible for the medical disasters of the South African War to be repeated. It was to this point that he wished to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention, because as far as he knew, nothing had yet been done in this direction, or at any rate nothing had been completed. He strongly urged this point from the first because it seemed to him to afford a model for the policy this country ought to pursue in all Army matters, viz., that of restricting the standing Army within reasonable limits while giving it every power of efficient expansion to meet the demands of a great war. He thought no one had more clearly enunciated that policy than the right hon. Gentleman. Whatever might be the difficulties in carrying that policy out in some of the more highly specialised departments of the Army, the medical service afforded an admirable opportunity for it. They might not have an unlimited supply of artillerymen, engineers, scouts, and so on, outside of the standing Army, ready to be called upon at a moment's notice, but they certainly had an unlimited supply of efficient medical men and surgeons. And the spirit of patriotism which inspired these gentlemen during the South African War would always, he believed, remain. But the crux of the matter was organisation. As he had pointed out before in this House on more than one occasion, there were two ways of utilising civilian aid in time of war. The first and simplest way was to obtain civilian practitioners, orderlies and nurses, and absorb them, so to speak, for the time required, into the regular Army Medical Service. Even that required a scheme whereby they could be obtained quickly, their proper places in military hospitals apportioned, their relations to the Army medical officer and their temporary rank settled. There was no such system in the South African War. Medical men were obtained by advertisement. No time was given for properly examining their qualifications; or if time was taken it delayed their going out. The whole matter was tied up in red tape. A civilian surgeon with a practice bringing him in £4,000 a year, who came forward in a spirit of patriotism, was rejected, because he was forty-one instead of forty. When they got to South Africa there was no proper scheme for placing them. A consultant surgeon of great experience—he did not refer to the distinguished gentleman who went out in that capacity—was placed in a hospital with the rank of captain, under—with regard to the medical treatment of his patients—an Army medical major who had not one-hundredth part of the civilian scientific knowledge of surgery. Yet his subsequent treatment of his patient and the question whether he should be removed or not the next day, was under the control of the Army medical officer, because he was a major, and the distinguished civil surgeon only a captain.

He (the speaker), on a former occasion referred to the great general hospital in Bloemfontein, where civilian medical officers were merged with the Regular Army medical officers, owing to there being no system whereby their proper relations could be ascertained. The friction between these two classes of medical men was so great that the hospital was disorganised, and the Surgeon-General in South Africa admitted that the friction must go on until the machine broke down. All this only needed a scheme settled beforehand between the heads of the civilian medical profession and the Regular department. He had dealt with one way of using civilian aid. And he gathered from the Memorandum issued with the Estimates that this method, viz., of absorbing civilian aid into the Regular Army Medical Service during war time, was the only one contemplated. The words of the paragraph were somewhat vague and it might be, and he hoped it was not the case, that much more than this was contemplated. Because there were two great objections to relying upon this method: First, they would not obtain the services of the highest class of civilian medical men. They would not consent to be placed under the Army Medical officers in the matter of the treatment of their patients. Therefore, only younger men would be retained—house surgeons, students, and so on; or what was more probable, they would get a large number of men who had been unsuccessful in civilian practice. The second objection was that this method, while it might satisfy the requirements of a campaign slightly beyond the requirements of the Regular Service, would never be equal to the demands of a great war. It would only overcrowd a limited number of units with a new *personnel* who would not be accustomed to their places and had never been practised in the different and graduated functions, on the harmonious working of which the efficiency of a unit depended. He therefore turned to the second method which he strongly urged upon the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman—that of solid civilian units properly organised and trained for a certain time in field service every year and ready, when the call of a great war came, to go out. He made this suggestion from the first because it was founded on experience. They had a splendid example of it in that great system of voluntary hospitals which played such an important part in the South African War. There was even a more notable example in the case of the New South Wales Army Medical contingent—a solid self-contained unit with field hospitals, bearer companies, tents, horses, and all requisite equipment—which did magnificent service wherever it went. The most distinguished medical men and surgeons in Australia were attached to it. They had organised it and taken part in its annual training in peace time; and when the war came they left their valuable practices and gave their services for nothing out of pure patriotism. He understood that a scheme, the first suggested, drawn up by a gentleman of great medical war experience—Dr. George Stoker—for the organisation of such civilian units in connection with the great hospitals in this country, had long been in the hands of the War Office. The whole system of the civilian hospitals in the South African War was due to Dr. Stoker's initiative. He suggested and helped to organise the first voluntary hospital. He suggested and helped to organise, and went out with, the great Irish hospital—which was Irish from its senior officers down to its rules—which did signal service in the war. A similar plan was subsequently urged by the distinguished Army Medical officer, Sir William Taylor, who was made Director-General of the Army Medical Service after the war. Speaking on October 17th, 1902, on this subject, he said—

> "He hoped each medical school or combination of schools would equip, maintain, and administer units in time of peace which should proceed to the field in a state of complete efficiency for war when required. . . . He looked forward to the time when such medical organisation would not be fitful, and necessarily dependent on enthusiasm in time of public danger, but would be carefully organised at all times, so that the country might feel assured that, as far as human endeavours could go, everything was prepared and ready in time of peace for the most perfect care of the sick and wounded in time of war."

There might be other schemes than the one to which he had alluded. But the principle was what he wanted to get at—the principle of civilian units, organised, practised to some extent in field service, equipped sufficiently for such practice, with the full equipment ready at any time to be supplied them—prepared to go out to a war. Of course, when the call came there might have to be some changes in the *personnel;* but the framework would be there ready at any moment to be filled up. It required organisation. In the late war there was no organisation and no system. There was plenty of enthusiasm and plenty of patriotic devotion. He believed they could always rely upon these qualities, especially in the great civilian medical profession in this country. But they could not rely upon those who possessed them for efficient organisation for war service at a moment's notice. This should be undertaken in peace time by the proper authorities; and be carefully thought out, prepared, and accepted by the civilian profession.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) said he should be the last to complain of the speech of the hon. Member. At the time of the war the hon. Gentleman performed a very valuable service in drawing the attention of the public to the real importance of hospital reform and to many matters connected with the medical service of the Army, and it must have been some satisfaction to him to have observed that, in the years which had elapsed since then, progress had been made. The hon. Member had referred to a matter of great importance, not only so far as the Army Medical Service was concerned, but the Army generally: namely, the policy of extension in time of war. It was perfectly plain that, with their increasing burdens, no nation—certainly not this nation—could bear the charges of keeping everything in time of peace upon the level that they had to be in time of war. Therefore they had to act upon the principle of asking themselves what steps they could take to prepare in time of peace things in skeleton so that they might be clothed with flesh when war broke out. The outbreak of war must be their test, and it was the only test which they could apply. He had given a general indication of his own views on that subject, and now came to the question from the point of view of the medical service itself. The very efficient Director-General of the Army Medical Service had had the matter to which the hon. Gentleman had called attention much under consideration lately, and a start had been made very much, he thought, on the lines alluded to by the hon. Member. They recognised that, in order to make the civilian doctor, for civilian doctor he would be for the main during peace time, efficient in time of war, he must go through a special training. Even the distinguished men who went out to South Africa at the time of the war found themselves very much out of it when they came to the special work which the Army surgeon had to do. He did not himself realise the reason of that clearly until he read the other day one of the latest treatises upon military hygiene. They could not in time of peace keep up the great body of men that would be necessary to do the work in time of war if there were any other way of getting them trained in time of peace so that they would be ready to spring into activity when war broke out. There was a sum of £4,500 in this Vote for a reserve of civilian surgeons, and what they proposed was to take 150 young medical men who were willing to enter the new Army Medical Reserve and train them. They would be subject to the rules that governed the employment of Reserve officers generally, and would have the rank of lieutenant on joining, with promotion to captain after three and half years satisfactory service. A practitioner joining the Reserve would have to undergo a course of special training at the depot of the Royal Army Medical Corps at Aldershot. During this time he would receive the pay and allowances of an officer of his rank in the Royal Army Medical Corps. If this probationary period of service was satisfactory, he would be confirmed in his rank and receive, in his second and third years, a retaining fee of £20 a year. He must, of course, do something for that money, and he would be called upon to undergo another period of instruction preparatory to passing the examination which was necessary for promotion to the rank of captain. During this second course, the duration of which would be one month, he would be paid as before. After promotion to the rank of captain, his retaining fee would be £25 a year. They proposed to limit the period of service in the Reserve to seven years, by which time he would have learned enough to make him, with his civilian knowledge, able to take the field with the knowledge that was requisite in these matters. The Reserve would primarily be composed of civilian surgeons, but they did not intend to exclude officers of the Auxiliary Forces and medical officers of the Volunteers, provided they were seconded in their Volunteer corps. These Reserve officers could resign their commissions under the usual conditions. They also hoped to get a certain number of Reserve attendants in the same way, and to make this medical department of the Army one which would turn out to be of great service in the future. The Committee would observe that they were increasing the Vote for the Medical Service. If they were to make the Army really efficient and really cheap they must get rid of the wastage as far as possible, and the increasing cost which came to the State in enormous sums through the men not being properly looked after. They had increased the Vote for nurses in like manner. He felt that this matter was only in its infancy, but they were making a beginning. The strides that had been made in this department of the Army were enormous. He did not think anybody who had not had his attention called to the subject could realise the immense changes that had been made for the better in the care of the sick in our Army. They had got the whole matter on to something like scientific principles, and they were reaching a stage at which, he thought, they would find that there really was a scientific system of looking after our soldiers. He was glad to think that, in the British Army, to-day, the same attention was being bestowed upon these matters as was given to them in the Japanese Army during the late war, and in Germany for a long time past, and the same anxiety was being displayed to improve the general condition of our men.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had pursued the line of improvement with regard to the Army Medical Service. What was done by Mr. Brodrick in that respect had marked a complete change from the old practice, and had opened the way for the immense strides that had since been made. The right hon. Gentleman himself had made a distinct step in advance by requiring something from the civilian surgeon for the retaining fee which was paid to him. He entirely agreed that this was one of the cases in which the civilian element might be brought in, to reinforce the military element; but he wanted to speak a word of caution. The civilian medical officer was improving in his particular work every day that he spent away from the Army visiting the hospitals, whilst those who were performing the actual military work of the Army were deteriorating for military purposes while in civil life. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to say whether any further progress had been made in utilising the Militia as attendants in the Army Medical Department? He was glad that the expenditure on this department was still on the upward grade, because on any basis of mobilisation the Army Medical Service had not been up to the requirements of the Army in war. A great deal had been done in that direction, but there were still insufficient officers for the reasonable probabilities of mobilisation; and therefore he trusted the Committee would be reconciled, as he believed they would be, to the additional expenditure foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. HALDANE said that he had taken up the idea that he had inherited from his predecessor of using Militiamen as attendants in the Army Medical Service. A start had been made with 500 of them, and he hoped it would be developed later.

Colonel LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) was sure no hon. Member would grudge this increased cost, because the health of the soldier was of the very greatest importance. He desired to suggest that an interchange might take place, so that when the civil surgeons entered the military hospitals the Army surgeons might be relieved of their duties temporarily in order that they might study in the civil hospitals. An interchange of that kind, he thought, might be beneficial. With regard to nursing, an hon. Gentleman had said that the Army Medical Department was opposed to nurses; but his recollection was that it was not the Army Medical Department, but the soldiers themselves, who preferred the hospital orderly. That, however, had been got over now. There was no doubt that what happened in South Africa had made a very great change in the opinion with regard to the subject. He was very glad to see that there was a considerable addition to nursing establishments.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he should like to know whether the remarks of the Secretary of State for War with regard to utilising civilian surgeons in the Army Medical Service would apply also to the lower grades of the service, because his impression was that they were not getting anything like value for their money in the Army Medical Service. He had heard of young men joining because the work was so easy. One young man told him that, while he received 15s. 6d. a week and had everything found, his only duty was to sweep out the ward of a hospital, and that it was generally over by ten o'clock in the morning. It would be cheaper, if this was the case, to employ a charwoman. He had also heard that young doctors were deterred from entering the service by the absurd insistence on military discipline. In going round the wards the doctor had to wear full military uniform, including a helmet, in case his colonel should appear. He was told that it was a frequent occurrence for the surgeon's helmet to fall on to the patient's face during a stethoscopic examination.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he thought the hon. Gentleman must be mistaken. He had never seen such things happen in a military hospital. The question he desired to ask, however, was whether the Army surgeon was encouraged to attend courses of lectures at civilian hospitals in order to keep abreast of the most modern practice. A little while ago the Army surgeon who attempted to keep himself efficient in this way had to do it at his own expense; and, he believed, if he obtained leave for three weeks or a month his pay was deducted. Would the right hon. Gentleman see whether military surgeons, and even reserve surgeons, attending hospital lectures could not be allowed full pay for the time so occupied, and have their fees paid? The military surgeon was not generally a very rich man, and the fees to begin with were a heavy fine upon him, and if he were deprived of pay during his attendance at the lectures it was an additional reason for his not attending them.

MR. HALDANE said the hon. and gallant Gentleman would find on the Estimates this year the fees entered for the purpose mentioned. What the Government did was to pay the fees of those who were sent to the lectures and also for getting proper kinds of lectures given. It was part of the regular training of an Army surgeon to go through these professional courses at ordinary hospitals. The fees were paid and the pay was not stopped. What they were very anxious to do was to keep the military and civilian courses of training as much in touch as possible.

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £819,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Bounty, etc., of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 141,058, including 8,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

COLONEL HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.) said he rose to move a reduction of £100 for the purpose of calling attention to a matter of some constitutional importance, namely, the intervention of Militia officers in Parliamentary elections. Circumstances had occurred in his own constituency which had led him to raise the question. His constituency included the ancient borough of Monmouth, which was the head quarters of a Militia battalion called, he believed, the Royal Monmouthshire Militia Battalion Royal Engineers. It was also the place where the training of the battalion was usually carried out. The period of training naturally caused considerable local interest, leading as it did to expenditure of money in the district. In the course of his candidature, it was put forward without any ground whatever that he was opposed to the retention of the battalion in those quarters. The statement went about that he was averse to the training being carried out in that place. It became necessary for him to make a clear statement to the contrary, because nothing could be further from his wishes than to disturb in any way the connection between the territorial Militia regiment and its local headquarters. A letter appeared in a local paper, called the *Monmouthshire Beacon,* a somewhat archaic journal, purporting to be signed by the officer commanding the regiment in question, controverting the statement he had made, and saying that if the venue for training were changed he would, to a considerable extent, be responsible. That letter was calculated to cause a certain amount of feeling in the agricultural district, which was closely connected with the regiment, and with which he also was connected. He regretted to have to bring the matter forward, and he should not have done so except under a strong feeling of public duty, and in the interests of the Militia force, to obtain a clear definition as to the limits to which officers might go, so that they might be restrained from that which would be a serious detriment to the Militia force and which had been so detrimental in other spheres, namely, the introduction of political questions. It was immaterial what the question at issue was. He was quite willing to believe that it was a mere error of judgment, and he did not want to impute anything more than was in the four corners of the letter, but it would have been much better if it had not been written. Here was a gentleman who was the commanding officer of the Militia endeavouring to influence certain persons in the neighbourhood who were interested in this particular election. The letter appeared on the nomination day, Friday, and as it was a weekly paper it was impossible before a week had passed that there could be any reply on his behalf to make clear to the electors what his real opinions were. Therefore he had to take his chance, and it was a good chance, because in spite of this and other difficulties he managed to be returned by a very large majority. The point he wished to know was, how far an officer might go on such occasions? The gentleman in question, Lord Raglan, was one of the best commanding officers in the country and was a very good friend of his outside politics, and he was quite sure that Lord Raglan would understand that he brought forward the matter merely in the interests of the service. He had shown the letter to the Secretary of State for War, and he left it to his judgment, as one who understood the legal aspect of such matters and the interpretation that might be placed on it, to say whether it was not quite possible that such a letter would influence persons against him. At the same time in his view a serious error of judgment was committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £818,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Colonel Herbert.*)

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said he only wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War what he was going to do with the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the Militia in his opening speech on the Army Estimates, but he could not make out definitely what the right hon. Gentleman was going to do. He (Sir Carne Rasch) spoke as the man-in-the-street, who wanted to know what was going to be done in regard to this very difficult problem. What was the condition of the Militia at the present moment? He did not think anything was ever so bad in the British service in the last 200 years. There was a force nominally of 90,000 men, which had no guns, no transport, and hardly any officers in the junior ranks. So far as the *personnel* went, he did not think the Militia could turn out under any circumstances, within 40 per cent. of the recognised and official regulation strength. There had to be deducted all those men who were coming from the Militia to the line—probably about 22,000—those men who were recruits and who had not passed any musketry test, and also fraudulent enlistments, because men in the Militia had a way of serving in half a dozen regiments, and there was nothing to stop them. Under the circumstances, the Militia force was not within 40 per cent. of its recognised strength. They all knew that the Militia brigades were under orders for the Peninsula, though they did not go there; that they garrisoned our stations in the Mediterranean during the Crimean war; and that a portion of them went to the front during the South African War. He thought that the Secretary of State should tell them what he was going to do now. The right hon. Gentleman had a good set of men in the Militia, but they were of no good whatever as they were at present. If he would undertake to mend them he would have good results, and the money devoted to this purpose would be well spent.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon) said he did not observe that the attack made on Lord Raglan had any bearing on the question of the Militia. He thought it would be most unreasonable to press the Secretary for War for an Answer in regard to the Militia, because he had told them so often and so clearly that he had not yet fully considered the question. They were in this difficulty, that this would be the only opportunity of discussing the Militia question this year, and it was quite possible that before another opportunity came again, the right hon. Gentleman would have dealt with the Militia in a way calculated, they all hoped, greatly to improve them. He thought, therefore, it would do no harm to say a word or two about some matters which might claim their attention. He would respectfully recommend the right hon. Gentleman to go and see for himself what the Militia was. He believed there was no more certain road to understanding the problem. They talked of the Militia as if it had no relation to the Army at all. What happened every year? Every year the Secretary of State for War had to put his name to a statement with regard to the Militia which he knew to be untrue. He was afraid he had done it himself, but he had taken great pains to inform the House of the fact. At present hundreds and indeed thousands of young men were going to the Militia depots who were never intended for the Militia at all. In one year alone 15,000 of these boys were entered in the books as Militiamen, though practically the whole of them passed into the Army. They were put down on one page as 15,000 Militiamen, and on another page as 15,000 of the Regular Army. The reason for this was that the non-commissioned officer in charge of the recruiting got a bounty for recruiting a boy for the Militia, and he kept him at the Militia depot for two or three weeks, and then enlisted him in the Army, for which he received a half-crown in addition to the original shilling. For some of the depots this happened in the case of 70 per cent. of the recruits, and thus they were dealing with an absolute sham. The right hon. Gentleman said the other day that he regarded the Militia as a force that ought to supplement the Regular Army, and to a certain extent act as a reserve. That was a very admirable aspiration, but until the functions of the Militia were much more clearly defined it could not serve that purpose. He would like to know how they were to supplement the Army. Were they to be a reserve of the Army in the sense of the ordinary Reserve? Were they to furnish drafts to the Army, or were they to be a force to be utilised to assist the Army in the field? If that was so, he would like to tell the Committee what would happen. If it was desired now to put two divisions of Militia of eight battalions 800 strong each into the field it would be necessary to go all over the United Kingdom to get the men. Even if the men were got together, under the ordinary rules which governed the formation of a battalion for war, some 5,400 men would have to be left behind. Of these 5,400 men many hundreds, he might say thousands, would be boys of seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen years of age, and one, two, or three years must elapse before they could take their places. There was no reserve and no means of filling up these battalions in the field without calling up men equally unfit. It would be necessary to draft 5,400 men from the rest of the Militia, and if two more divisions were required nearly 11,000 men would have to be taken in the same way. For fighting purposes the Militia was now an absolute delusion. There would be nothing but decay so long as the present system lasted, and until the Militia was put on a basis which did not make it absolutely essential to the Line that decay would go on. Hon. Members did not realise what would happen to the Regular Army recruiting if this experiment of the right hon. Gentleman were to prove successful. If the Militia were really to be kept out of the Regular Army until they had served their training the recruiting for the Regular Army would be destroyed. Any commissioned or non-commissioned officer who knew the Militia would say that was true. That would be paying "too dear for their whistle." He would try to point out to the Committee the only method by which the Militia could be saved. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not abandon his idea of connecting the

Militia more intimately with the counties. He did not see why the position of deputy-lieutenant should not be confined to those who in some way had shown a desire to serve in a military capacity. But he believed there would be no fruition of that promise until the Militia was made a separate body and not regarded as an adjunct to the Line. Without giving a complete survey of the position, he had merely alluded to some of the difficulties which were, he thought, most serious in dealing with this question. The whole survey of the question must come when the right hon. Gentleman submitted concrete proposals. He anticipated these proposals with nothing but sanguine feelings. As to the Militia Artillery it was true, as the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had said, that money had been taken in successive years for the formation of three brigades instead of one. It was also true that the reports on the whole in regard to the one brigade were good. But he himself had given an immense amount of attention to the whole of these reports, and he considered that at present the Militia Artillery was a rather expensive article. He wished to impress on those who were pressing the question of reinforcing the Field Artillery from the Militia Field Artillery that they must remember first, that the artillery was a highly skilled arm; that unless they got the very highest skill in that arm they might be terribly out-classed in action. Secondly, they must remember that if they wished to add to the force of Field Artillery there were other sources than the Militia Field Artillery from which it could be reinforced.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield), whilst admitting that the Militia was not in a first class condition, thought that the hon. and gallant Member for the Chelmsford Division of Essex went too far when he stated that the Militia was in a worse condition than it had ever been. Although the hon. and gallant Member was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War, he was still of opinion that the picture had been painted blacker than it was. It was perfectly true in the old days, as stated by the hon. and gallant Member, that men served in several battalions, and were counted on paper over and over again, but those who knew the Militia of to-day were perfectly aware that that sort of thing took place so seldom that practically it might be said to never occur now. A Question had been put as to whether the Militia was to be done away with or turned into an efficient military force. The Militia had been very nearly done away with by the continuous changes that had been made in its constitution by the late Secretary of State for War. Those changes had done more injury to the Militia than anything else had ever done, and he was glad to see that the present Secretary of State for War had not brought in a great plan to change everything at once. The great difficulty at the present moment in the Militia was the question of recruiting. The shortage of recruits was greatest in the regiments belonging to agricultural districts, because of the migration of the people from the land to the large towns. He would suggest that those regiments should be allowed to recruit in the towns in their neighbourhood which were now outside their recruiting area. He could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon as to men who had been in the Militia a year not being willing to join the Army. In many cases the men joined the Army at once in order to get the benefit of the year towards seniority, but if they were not allowed to join the line until the end of the year they would join at the end of that time just as willingly as they joined now. The only difference would be that where the boy was now taken into the Army and grew into a man at the expense of the country, he would then go into the Militia and would join the Army when he had grown to manhood. He hoped the suggestion which he had made as to the recruiting of regiments in agricultural districts would be taken into consideration, and that no alteration would be made in the Militia system by the right hon. Gentleman until he had had full time to consider the position. They could trust to the right hon. Gentleman to keep the Militia the force it was intended to be, namely, the best system of reserve which we had in this country.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he desired to put a few

Questions to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the new scheme of training of these Militia regiments. That scheme was first announced in the debate on the address by the President of the Local Government Board, who put it forward as a practical attempt on the part of the present Government to deal with the problem of the unemployed. The right hon. Gentleman then said that one of the actions to be taken by the Government to deal with that problem was to call out twenty battalions of Militia for training during the winter; that that was the time when there was most distress, and that by deferring the training of these battalions to the winter they would contribute, to that extent, to the solution of the problem of the unemployed. He failed to see how that was going to benefit these regiments. We were now getting on in the year, and it would be a great convenience if the Secretary of State would suggest which twenty regiments were to be so trained. If these twenty regiments were going to be trained during the winter it would be impossible to put them under canvas in one of our great camping grounds, which was the best course of training that could be given. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that barracks were to be utilised where possible. He could not help thinking that putting these men into barracks in the winter rather than under canvas in summer would be the last way in the world to make them efficient. But the right hon. Gentleman also seemed to indicate that in some cases it would be impossible to find barracks, and that meant that in such cases the men would have to be billeted. Everyone knew that of the three ways of keeping troops together, keeping them under canvas, keeping them in barracks, and billeting them, the last was the worst. In the first place, they could not be sure of the times at which the men came in at night; unpunctuality in the morning always followed, and where men were billeted all over the town they lost that *esprit de corps* which was engendered by men always being together. Under the new scheme he understood that increased attention was to be given to musketry practice. Every one welcomed the decision of the Secretary of State with regard to that. But how increased attention to musketry was to be given by bringing the men out in the winter passed all comprehension. One of the difficulties of the Militia officers was how to find sufficient time for proper attention to be given to musketry. They would take these men out in the winter when the weather was most severe, and all the conditions were possibly most inimical to suitable musketry training, added to which there was the range difficulty. They would find it impossible to send these men to our great camping grounds, and in case after case they would find that the men had to put up with the old-fashioned ranges close to the town in which they were billeted. The scheme of the right hon. Gentleman meant that twenty regiments were to go through their training during the winter months by themselves, and without cavalry and without artillery. The manœuvres which these men would be expected to go through would therefore be manœuvres of infantry alone; there would be no mixed force. That in his opinion very much diminished the value of the scheme, and he wanted to know what the effect upon the recruit was going to be. He could not ask the right hon. Gentleman to give him an answer now, as he had already indicated that he was going to watch carefully the result of these changes both on the Militia and on the line. He could not help thinking himself that if the right hon. Gentleman had inquired of the commanding officers concerned, he would not have received from them any great encouragement as to the likelihood of this scheme's having any important effect upon recruiting. He also wished to know what effect this scheme was going to have on the unemployed problem. It was paraded originally as a solution or a partial solution of that question. He should like to know what proportion of these Militiamen were what one might call habitually unemployed during the winter months, and it would be still more interesting to learn upon what proportion of these Militiamen their families could be said properly to depend. His impression was that, so far as this scheme was designed to render relief to the unemployed, it would be a complete and abject failure. As to its effect upon the Militia, of course it would be premature to offer any judgment, but certainly from the obvious criticism which arose upon its consideration he did not think it had many elements of success. The right hon. Gentleman had stated in his introductory speech that the test which he applied to all those Army schemes was that of fighting efficiency. That was an admirable test, and no doubt if it was carried through would provide a suitable measure for Army organisation. But he could not believe for a moment that this scheme was introduced in order to enhance the fighting powers of the Militia. The internal evidence pointed to its having been introduced by the Local Government Board and not by the War Office. [Mr. Haldane dissented.] He was glad to find that that was not the case, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to show the House that the fighting test as applied to this particular machine would demonstrate that the training of the Militia battalions during the winter was likely to be of some effect. He was glad think that fighting efficiency was the test by which this scheme was to be measured, but he could not but think that other portions of the problem were measured with anything but economy.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said the noble Lord had rather suggested that this scheme of bringing up the Militia battalions for training in winter was the work of the Local Government Board, but if the noble Lord looked to the Report of the Norfolk Commission he would probably find that this suggestion was made by them. He noticed also that one or two of the other suggestions put forward by the Secretary of State were taken from that Report. Everybody who had looked at the figures and remembered the glowing picture drawn in this House by Mr. Brodrick four or five years ago would regret the state of the Militia, the numbers of which had gone down from 113,000 in 1899 to 85,000 at present. That was a most regrettable drop, but what the Committee wanted to know was the exact position as to efficiency of the Militia at the present moment. The noble Lord had drawn a very melancholy picture as to the difficulties of recruiting if the men were billeted at home. But his own recollection went back to a regiment which adopted that particular method of recruiting and training. He took the case of the 7th battalion of the Rifle Brigade in 1901. On April 1st, 1901, that battalion was 490 strong and on April 1st, 1902, it was 471 strong. The commanding officer obtained from the War Office leave to allow the recruits whom he enlisted to live at home during the period of enlistment. What was the result ? On January 1st, 1903, recruits were allowed to live out of the barracks and on April 1st the strength of the battalion had risen to 775. At the last training in 1904 the strength of the battalion was 850, and it was a better battalion of Militia than any other. That was the direct result of allowing a Militia battalion to do the thing which the noble Lord had suggested would be so disastrous, in regard to both its efficiency and its strength. He should like to ask the Secretary of State whether he could do for him a thing which was refused by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. A few years ago there was created at the War Office the post of Inspector-General, whose duty it was to go round in person or by deputy and inspect the arms of His Majesty's forces. The duty was mostly performed by deputy, but this House knew nothing of the nature of the Reports made to the Secretary of State. The condition of trade in this country was reported upon by inspectors, the factories were reported upon, the details of local government were also reported upon, and the various Reports were invariably presented to the House of Commons. They got detailed statements about many Army matters, including the actual fighting force of the Army and recruiting, and they even got a Report upon the prisons of the Army, but of the actual state of the Army as to efficiency they knew absolutely nothing from the military authorities. It might be said that it was injudicious, unwise, and impossible to give to the House information which might be used by the enemy, but he was quite sure that there was nothing which was known to the War Office about the actual fighting efficiency of the Army which was not known to foreign powers, and he thought it would go a long way to justify military expenditure if they knew exactly the state of the Army. As to the Militia, there was a terrible dearth of officers. It was due to the fact that there was in the Army a class of officers who had long maintained that they had a right to a monopoly of the commissions in the Army and Militia. The want of patriotism of these people had been displayed in a deplorable manner during the last few years, and they had failed to come up to national expectations. It was necessary that some more democratic system should be introduced which should apply to all the subjects of the Crown, and he hoped the Secretary of State would take steps to draw officers from all classes of society instead of from one only. He thought it unnecessary to have the very long rifle ranges which had been created since the South African war. If the War Office went to the counties from which the Militia and Volunteers were recruited and asked for support, not from one class and not from the few, but appealed to local sentiment, and if the men were given freedom of leave during their training, he was sure that they would get a very much larger measure of support than they did at present. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon used to talk about the drilling of the Army by soldiers, but he thought that that drilling should remain in the hands of the civilian element. The training of the Militia had been from time immemorial that of a civilian force, and it was important that it should be continued to be trained in the same way.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square) wished to urge upon the Secretary of State for War that he should do everything in his power to foster and encourage the Militia. He believed in that force as a very valuable reserve for the Army. It was an old constitutional force and was based upon the fact that every citizen should be trained for the defence of his country. Originally the Militia were not called upon to serve outside their counties, but now they were liable for service in any part of the United Kingdom. He believed also that it was possible to bring it about that they should now serve out of the United Kingdom in time of war. When called upon as Volunteers he was confident that they would be prepared to accept that responsibility and duty. He sincerely hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman put forward his scheme next year he would introduce some means by which the Militia could be properly utilised as a reserve for the British Army.

*SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest) craved the indulgence which the House always extended to a new Member who addressed it for the first time. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had foreshadowed in his very admirable, and, if he might say so, delightful, speech in introducing the Estimates an idea of reviving the local influence of lord-lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants in raising the Militia, increasing its popularity, and facilitating recruiting. They were all agreed on these beneficient objects. They all wished God-speed to the right hon. Gentleman in his efforts to electrify or galvanize this old constitutional force. The position of lord-lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants towards the Militia Forces of the Crown was defined by law. Every year the Militia ballot was only suspended for one year by a suspensory Act, which was included in the Expiring Laws Continuance Act, and, but for the passing of this Act, the Ballot Act for raising the Militia would actually come into force. The Militia Ballot Act was not repealed but only suspended year by year. It still therefore remained on the Statute Book as a final resource of defence of the country in time of dire need. The functions and duties of lord-lieutenants and deputy-lieutenants, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had said, were defined and regulated by this dormant Act. In simple language, these gentlemen were appointed to raise the Militia, and the machinery and method of doing so were laid down by the Militia Ballot Act. The deputy-lieutenants were given defined areas from which they are to produce a defined quota of eligible men, and the lists of such men are to be furnished by the local overseers. Might one gather from the Secretary of State that some such voluntary system could be devised, on a similar plan, for raising Militia recruits by the local influence of the deputy-lieutenants ? It had, however, been the custom for many years to look upon deputy-lieutenants simply as distinguished local gentlemen, to whom the right was given of wearing at Court or at a levee uniforms more or less ugly or comical. That had come to be regarded as the be-all-and end all of the appointment, but the real reason for its existence had been strangely forgotten. It was satisfactory to know that the Secretary of State contemplated furbishing up and putting to good use this constitutional machinery.

He hoped that under this scheme deputy-lieutenants would be brought up-to-date, and that they would be men who would really do something more than once or twice a year to drag ancient ugly red coats out of camphor-lined boxes, for the purpose of parading before His Majesty at Court functions. This question had been raised on various occasions in Parliament recently, and it had been dealt with in another place by Lord Lansdowne when Secretary of State for War. If the right hon. Gentleman now saw his way to make some good local use of deputy-lieutenants of counties in recruiting our gallant country lads in a popular manner to join the ranks of the local Militia he should, speaking as a deputy-lieutenant, like to encourage the right hon. Gentleman to pursue that excellent course.

LORD MORPETH (Birmingham, S.) said there had been numerous debates upon the questions which concerned the Militia, and there had been questions raised as to whether the force should be ended or mended. Before the South African War the Yeomanry of the country had got to such a state that the same kind of thing was talked about them. It was said that the money spent upon them could be saved by their abolition, but they now knew that the Yeomanry was one of the most useful auxiliary services. They knew the services that the force had rendered in the past and the services which they were likely to render in the future. As to the Militia, he did not think it was one of the forces to whom the country should grudge their sustenance; it should be supported in the same way as the Regular Army. For that reason he believed that it was a wise policy that in the future recruits must serve with the force with which they had been recruited. He did not propose to go into the question of how far the Militia could be a supplement to the regular Army at the present time. They knew the shortcomings of the present system; but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon went somewhat too far in his description of their weakness, although he recognised the truth of his general outline. If there was a brief campaign in this country or on the continent, many Militiamen would be able to go at short notice. Many Militiamen who had never loaded a rifle in their lives were sent out to South Africa, and they did well there. He did not say that that was as it should be, but they ought to face the difficulties of the situation and to train these men properly. He believed that the Militia officer and the Militiaman himself were zealous; and, given the opportunity, they would avail themselves of it. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had told the House that he would be guided in all he did solely by the consideration whether the changes that were to be made would conduce to efficiency in time of war. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman to abide by that statement. If the Militia battalions were to be trained in the winter months, that was only a sort of underhand way of dealing with the question of unemployment. Unemployment was, however, a non-military matter, and the right hon. Gentleman would be training the Militia for not a military but a civilian purpose. He did not go so far as the noble Lord the Member for Chorley on the question of billeting. He himself had served in the battalion referred to by the hon. Gentleman in which the system of billeting was adopted, and he thought that it was an experiment which might be tried now and again. He could assure the noble Lord that the Militiamen in billets did not turn up late at the early parades, and that his battalion did not suffer any of the inconveniences to which the noble Lord referred. He believed that barrack life was not altogether congenial to the Militiamen. Although he enjoyed life under canvas in camp, he liked the billeting system, which combined the discipline of drill with the freedom to which he was accustomed in civil life. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had said that he would not for the present adopt any far-reaching plans. A constantly increasing difficulty in connection with the Auxiliary Forces was to get good men. That was not from want of patriotism, but because there was an increasing competition for recruits for the Militia, the Volunteers, and the Regular Army. He suggested to the right hon. Gentleman that, when he came to deal with his general plan of Army reform, he should find some system of unification for recruiting for all the Auxiliary Forces, because the present system was breaking down.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that they had

had a very interesting debate. The noble Lord who had just spoken had taken the line which had been taken by himself and his friends upon certain of the proposals of the former Secretary of State for War. The noble Lord had put his finger on the difficulty that there were too many classes and different kinds of recruits, primarily for home service, but with some idea of preparation for service abroad, competing one with another. At the present time the position of the Militia in the future was the subject of a difference of opinion — he would rather say a difference of nomenclature. The Secretary for War had said that, in his view, the Militia should be attached to the Regular Army rather than to the Volunteer portion of our defensive forces. While he (Sir Charles Dilke), favoured such a Militia, and well-trained Volunteers, he was not in favour of a policy which would lead to the subsidising of gipsy saloons, or stalls at fairs for the destruction of tobacco pipes. He believed in something like discipline and *esprit de corps*. He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War in trying to make out of the Militia a great home Regular Army. It was altogether premature to do more at present than to adumbrate the ideas in their minds on this question. The Secretary for War had sketched a general scheme, extremely vague, of course, but which showed that his mind was pointed in the right direction, and that they might expect proposals from him later in the year, or next year, which might be worthy of serious consideration by the House. There was only one topic which he should like to press on the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion. Was it possible for the right hon. Gentleman to show a little more of what was in his mind than he had manifested at Question time to-day? The right hon. Gentleman had given to the House no hint of his views on the subject of field artillery. In his first speech the Secretary of State for War alluded to the remarkable success which had attended the Swiss Artillery under the Militia system. The late Secretary of State for War had limited that view by saying that after consideration of this problem, and the evidence given before the Norfolk Commission, his mind pointed in the direction of Volunteers rather than of Militia Field Artillery. Would it be impossible to accede to the wishes of the Militia Field Artillery and comprise them amongst the twenty battalions to whom the tentative system was to be applied of training in the next winter?

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said he had for many years taken great interest in the question of the Militia. He was in favour of all kinds of experiments, and he believed they would not arrive at a solution of the difficulty of getting enough men to serve if they did not try experiments. He had the greatest respect for the opinions on this subject of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, but in alluding to some of the suggestions which had been made he seemed to be under the impression that it was proposed to bring together large crowds like what might be seen on a bank holiday at Hampstead Heath.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that what he had referred to was the suggestion in regard to rifle clubs.

MR. COCHRANE said he had seen something of the results of well organised rifle clubs. A patriotic countryman of his own had started a rifle club in a mining village where there were few occupations.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said there was just a chance of his being misrepresented in this matter. He was a little afraid that in some places the rifle club movement might be so used, unless worked in connection with responsible Volunteer officers, as to be of no practical good for the purpose of discipline.

MR. COCHRANE said there was always a danger of that. There was only a limited number of men who were ready at all to bear arms. There were different circumstances in different localities, and they could not lay down a hard and fast rule applicable to every district in the country. In some scattered villages, for instance, it was almost impossible to get up a unit for a Volunteer regiment, but there might be a number of young men in a village who would be pleased to join a rifle club. In a case within his knowledge a certain number of the members of the rifle club were got to compete against the local Volunteers with very satisfactory results indeed. The right hon. Baronet had spoken of discipline. He would undertake to say that with good officers who understood how to handle that class of men in a short time they would be got to obey any orders given to them. Although they might not get men who would march with the precision of Regulars marching on the Horse Guards Parade at the trooping of the colours, they would get a very substantial and efficient body of men, who could be relied on to defend the country if called upon to do so. What they wanted behind the Army and the Volunteers was a body of men who in the course of a few weeks would make thoroughly good soldiers. When anything went wrong in the Army or Militia someone was found to say that it was the fault of the officers. The hon. Member for Bristol said it was the fault of the officers and the class from whom the officers were drawn. He thought that was exceedingly unfair. He had seen a a good deal of the Militia officers, and he could testify that they gave up a great deal of their valuable time to the service of the country at considerable pecuniary loss.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said it was not the class of men who joined that he referred to, but the class who did not join. Of those who did join nothing could be said but the highest praise.

MR. COCHRANE said those who joined were doing their best. Nowadays there were very few people of the leisured class. Most people were engaged in business of one kind or another, and that had reduced the number of men who were prepared to serve in the Militia. The Militia officers and men did splendid work in South Africa, but they got little thanks from anybody. The rewards were given not to those who did good service, but were scattered broadcast among the senior officers. He appealed to the Secretary of State to do something to put the Militia ona better footing. If he did that he would find no difficulty in getting better officers. The training officers got in the Militia was extremely valuable to those who afterwards entered the Army. A great many commanding officers would rather have young officers who had come through the Militia. The Militia had always been a sort of Cinderella. In every one of our great wars the Militia had sent reserves of men to fight alongside of the Regular soldier, and he had never heard that the Militiamen had done worse than the Regulars. He welcomed the promise that the Militia would in future go out as complete units under their own officers in time of war. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to mean that the Militia were no longer to be deprived of the cream of their battalions and scattered about among other regiments. As to the recruiting of the battalion to which he belonged, he had never had the slightest difficulty in keeping up its numbers. There had been a system of looking after the men in winter and of trying to find employment for them. Some of the officers who had large works of their own had been able to aid materially in and facilitate this work. There had also been kitchens kept open in winter and distress had been relieved largely at the cost of the officers. As to training, one thing which militated against it was the sending of recruits to the depots to be trained. They liked to be trained with their own battalion. With regard to rifle ranges, if the men were trained in summer, when the weather was good and the evenings long, of course it was pleasanter, and much better results in shooting were obtained. But men in time of war could not always be firing in summer, and therefore a certain amount of practice under less favourable conditions was not at all undesirable. The amount of shooting practice the men got was of importance as well as the length of the range. He had seen splendid results from men trained at small safety ranges where the limit was 250 yards, and practice could be carried on under cover in any weather. Men so trained had been able to go out and compete at long ranges with considerable success. If they could have long ranges all over the country, and always shoot in summer, he would infinitely prefer it, but the next best thing to that was practice with the full-sized rifle with the ordinary charge and experience with sights at shorter ranges, so that the men might be accustomed to the recoil and learn generally how to handle the weapon. If there were some parts of the country where it would be more convenient to train the men in winter let that be tried, and if in other cases men liked to take their summer holiday under canvas then let that course be pursued as in the past. Why not try both systems? The Militia could be trained for £10 per man, as against £60 or £70 per man in the Regular Army. There was not much difference between the two when it came to hard work. A Militiaman wearing baggy trousers, an ill-fitting tunic, and not walking with alacrity might not inspire them with great admiration for the Force to which he belonged, but if that man were stripped naked they would see as magnificent a man as they could find. He spoke from very considerable experience, and took a very deep interest in the Militia. If the Militia were given a fair chance, they could be made into an extremely valuable body of men. They would march down any ordinary Line regiment, as they were used to a rougher life, and were not so pampered as the youths who joined the Regular Army.

Mr. HALDANE said that early in this debate the hon. Baronet the Member for the Chelmsford Division of Essex had asked him pointedly what he was going to do with the Militia. If he had had to answer that Question immediately after the hon. Baronet had sat down he would have been at a disadvantage. Since then, he had been singularly blessed by receiving a multitude of counsel. They had had a most interesting debate, not the less so because every Gentleman took a different view. One hon. Member said "Go and see the Militia at drill, and it will do you good." Another hon. Gentleman said "Go and see the Militia and you will learn something"; while the hon. Member for North Ayrshire said "You ought to see the Militiaman without his clothes." The noble Lord the Member for Chorley had drawn a most gloomy picture, in which his imagination ran riot, as to the ruinous condition of the Militia forces, but if he would have half an hour's private conversation with the right hon. Member for Croydon he would emerge a sadder and a wiser man.

Lord BALCARRES said that he referred to the winter training of the Militia.

Mr. HALDANE said that it had never been proposed that the training should be given exclusively in winter. What they had proposed was that they should take twenty battalions of Militia to operate upon experimentally. The twenty-seven days period of training would be raised to forty-one days, and the period of training for recruits would be increased from sixty-three days to six months. He hoped the Government would be able to put many of these twenty battalions in the big towns. They wished to see what they could get there in the way of support from a class of young men who had not hitherto come into the field of Militia recruiting and who were at present unemployed. Many of them, perhaps, were not in a fit condition to become soldiers; but if we took them for six months and put flesh on their bones we might make them into very different men. The essence of the experiment was an extension of the time of training and not a change in the system. He thought that, considering the condition of the Militia, it would be admitted on all hands that it was necessary to proceed experimentally. In reference to the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, he wished to point out that the Militia was no new institution which we were trying to create for the first time. It was an institution with a history, and a history which showed that in other days these men had done splendid service for their country. The question was whether we could afford to neglect the traditions of a body of this kind, or whether we should not do better to try to make all the use we could of the forces which in the past had gone to make them what they had been. Undoubtedly the condition of the Militia was far from satisfactory at present. Out of the 108 battalions a very large proportion were inefficient. We must get real and not sham soldiers for our money. The first thing to be done was to assign to the Militia a definite function, and a definite function which should be interesting and intelligible to them. They had a definite function not long ago, which was of great use to the Regular Army, but not to the Militia itself. Under the Militia reserve arrangements which had now ceased to exist, men were taken out of the Militia for the Regular Army and sent as individuals to South Africa. That experiment was disastrous to the Militia and must not be repeated. The Militiaman must feel that he belonged to a unit under his own officer; that if he served abroad he did not cease to be a militiaman, but preserved the traditions of his battalion, and that his own officer would go with him. He would like to see a far larger force available in case of a national emergency than was now available, but we could not get the whole or even the greater part of that force out of the Militia. The Militia could only be a supporting second line to the Regular Army. On one side of the line of division in our Forces we should have the Regulars and the Militia, and on the other the Territorial Army, comprising Volunteers, rifle clubs, and everything else. This organisation should furnish skeleton training and give instruction in shooting, to which he attached great importance, in time of peace. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Ayrshire that rifle clubs ought to be associated with some corps organisation. There was a second consideration which arose from our position in bringing out our reserves at the outbreak of war. He was under no illusion as to the absolute necessity for war training before the men would be fit to be placed in the field. It might be that in course of time they would have a natural Reserve put into action by being called into an effective condition in this fashion. The point was that the force had suffered, not only from having no function assigned to it, but from having been called on to perform a perfectly wrong function—namely, that of being a Reserve for the Regular Army. A great deal of drastic reform might be required, but he was sure that the Militia would never be placed on a sufficiently attractive footing unless it had the reputation of being composed of real and efficient battalions, which in too many cases was not the case now. As to the position of Lords-Lieutenant and Deputy-Lieutenants, it was obvious that, if they were going to deal with the Militia and with a territorial organisation of the Army generally, these functionaries ought to have real duties, and to be appointed only if they could show services rendered to the country, and were ready to give a promise of services in the future. That was one way in which we might hope to get more support for the Militia than was obtained at the present time. Then there was the question of Militia artillery. He quite agreed that it was necessary to have a high state of efficiency in the artillery, not only among the officers, but among the gunners, because the very essence of the work was a skill and judgment in placing the shell and in solving the many problems which arose in the course of an action. A perfectly efficient artillery on a large scale could not be got out of the Volunteers; but the case of the Honourable Artillery Company and other cases showed that the Militia and Volunteers could render very great services to the nation in the matter of artillery. There was an enormous amount of artillery work in which Militiamen could take a large part. The introduction of the quick-firing gun had made a great change in the number of men required for ammunition columns. They might look to the Militia trained man to do a great deal of the work which the progress of modern artillery necessitated. That, at all events, was one large function which might be performed by Militiamen. But, as regarded both the Militia and the Volunteers, he hoped it might be possible to go further. A good deal of the Volunteer artillery work consisted of pulling about big guns which were practically obsolete, and what was wanted was to train the men with guns they would have to use if matters came to a reality. He wished to say no more than this, that the problem was being thought out, not only by himself, but by others who were more competent. He would be very sorry to see the Militia and Volunteers cut off from all functions connected with artillery work. The matter, however, was too serious and far-reaching to be dealt with in a hurry. His hon. and gallant friend the Member for Monmouthshire had alluded to an incident during the late election. He had himself known many annoying incidents of the kind take place, and he congratulated his hon. and gallant friend, who was no doubt much less emotional than he was himself, on not only having suppressed his feelings, but also in having reached the top of the poll. That showed, he thought, that the matter was not taken very seriously. There was a regulation under which officers and soldiers were forbidden to take part in any meeting, demonstration, or procession of a political character. Under no circumstances were they to attend such meetings, wherever held, in uniform.

COLONEL HERBERT: But they can write letters to the papers, I understand.

MR. HALDANE: Oh, yes. Soldiers and officers were, after all, human beings. They all of them had two capacities. Even a War Minister had his emotions and he had a public and a private capacity, and it was very difficult to differentiate between him in his double capacity. Some years ago Lord Rosebery made a speech in Midlothian while an election was proceeding at Leith, and there was an immense amount of controversy as to the capacity in which he made that speech; whether as Prime Minister or as a peer or as a Lord-Lieutenant of the county, and they found it impossible to solve the question. He was sure that if Lord Raglan had infringed that regulation he did so unwittingly. He was also sure that he asked *bona fide* in a spirit of exuberant political enthusiasm.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he had never been strongly in favour of the long period of Militia service, and the only difference between himself and the right hon. Gentleman was whether it should be seven or twelve months. He had approved of two years because every military authority declared that was the minimum period consistent with efficiency. He should be content with a period of twelve months, because it did give an opportunity of successful and continuous training and of the training of Regular officers. The right hon. Gentleman had said that that would be departing from the old traditions of the force, but he would most respectfully suggest that they would be just as much departing from those old traditions by training the men for seven months as if they trained them for twelve. He thought battalion after battalion would be willing to join the right hon. Gentleman in making the experiment. He did not know why it was thought necessary to have curious performances upon Hounslow Heath, because at Walmer men were turned out trained after six or eight months.

MR. HALDANE said he had had nothing to do with the experiment at Hounslow Heath. It was suggested by an officer of experience, and he had refrained from mixing himself up in the experiment.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said he had seen men taught not only foot drill but also to shoot and to become good useful soldiers in a period of three months. If a man could shoot, surely he could be turned into a fairly good soldier in about a month or six weeks. It seemed to him that it would be possible in regard to the men so trained to enter into agreements with them that they should be called up in times of emergency. He thought everyone who was able ought to be willing to defend his country and his women and children when they were in danger. If such people as that were not prepared to defend them, who was to defend them? He did not think that in this country men should be encouraged to think it was neither their business to guard against starvation in time of war, nor their duty to defend their country in time of peril.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) did not wish to say a word against the idea of asking Militia battalions to come for training in the winter. There might possibly be very good reasons for that course, and it seemed to him to be an experiment which would be successful. If, however, it was intended to remedy the evils of unemployment in the winter, it did not appear to him to be the most satisfactory way of diminishing the unemployment in the casual labour market by making the training to last a period of six months. What class of men were going to be recruited? Under this condition of things the recruits would come from the ranks of casual labour. No man in regular employment could possibly join a force which had to train for six months. He believed that every reform in our Auxiliary Forces must be in the direction of raising the standard of the men recruited. If the Militia was ever to be a useful branch of the Regular Forces it must be recruited from a higher standard of men; and if the training was to be prolonged for six months it would be impossible to get men, except of the lowest standard, to join. It was only to sound that note of warning that he had intervened in this debate.

COLONEL HERBERT, in view of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

By leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*Mr. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) said that as a militiaman he was glad to hear there was to be a prolonged training. He was also glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that this experiment was not to be a real winter training for the whole battalion, but that there was to be six weeks training in the summer for the battalion, and six months winter training for the recruits. Every one would agree that an experiment which increased the duration of training to six weeks was one that deserved encouragement, because it was generally felt that a month was not sufficient to make a militiaman as efficient as he ought to be, if adequate time was to be given to musketry. He therefore rejoiced in this experiment. He hoped, however, in the case of the agricultural regiments, that when they were called out the right hon. Gentleman would allow those men to return home after a month's training who desired to do so, in order that work on the land might not be brought to a standstill. Would it not be possible in the future to train recruits at the battalion headquarters? At the present time the recruit was taken to the regimental depot and trained under officers he might never see again. If recruits were trained at their own battalion headquarters under their own officers and permanent staff non-commissioned officers, it would do much to encourage recruiting and *esprit de corps*. As regards officers, there were always a certain number who were willing to come and serve every winter, if necessary, at their own headquarters who would not be so willing to go to a regimental depot. The hon. Member for East Bristol had expressed the opinion with regard to the scarcity of officers that if they went to a lower grade they would get more officers. He dissented from that view, because the supply of officers largely depended upon the amount of time a man had to spare for military affairs. If recourse was taken to a lower grade the officers selected would have less time to spare, and would require a larger amount of pay. He welcomed the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that he was going to encourage and improve the musketry training of the Militia, and he was glad to think that the old system, under which men were got up at four in the morning, taken to the ranges and told to get through their rounds as quickly as possible, had come to an end.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said it seemed that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State was going to take the Militia very seriously, and as that was the case, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that he must not leave the condition of the officers out of consideration. The right hon. Gentleman must take care that the officers were well treated as well as the men. From a great deal of correspondence addressed to him lately he had come to the conclusion that there was a legitimate grievance on the part of the officers. If a regiment was to be efficient it must be well trained and smart in every part of its equipment. One part of a regiment's equipment was its band, and it certainly was not fair that the expense of supporting and maintaining the band should fall upon the officers. If the right hon. Gentleman inquired he would find that in many regiments the band was maintaned by two or three officers who were well off. That was a condition of things that should not be. The right hon. Gentleman should consider the matter from the point of view of whether it was not possible to make a small extra grant for the support and maintenance of the bands. Again, all officers in the Militia were not wealthy men, and having to provide themselves with a well-trained and good-looking charger was a very important matter with them. The right hon. Gentleman might extend to mounted officers in the Militia regiments the rights conceded to officers of the Line in this regard. Did the right hon. Gentleman contemplate any extension of the system under which officers of the Militia might pass from the Militia to the Regular Army? Because there again was an opportunity of making the Militia service more attractive and of drawing into it men who were reluctant to give their services.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) agreed with everything that had been said with regard to this experiment. They did not know whether it would be justified or not, but it was certainly a step in the right direction. It was better to have a large amount of shooting at 200 yards than a little shooting at 1,500, because it was not a very difficult thing for a man well up in shooting at 200 to make a good show at 1,500. As an old field artillery Militiaman he thought they could do a good deal with field guns in the Militia, and militiamen, if there were enough of them and they were allowed to shoot, would do very nearly as well as the Regulars. If they got men keen at their work, and gave them a little sympathetic treatment, they would repay them a thousandfold. They should also, in his opinion, have machine guns in the Militia. Within a very short time they would be able to handle them quite as well as the Regulars. And with regard to the scarcity of officers in the Army, they had only to offer a few commissions to Militia officers. When a militiaman joined the Regulars he was of a good deal more use than a Sandhurst man, because, though he might not, technically, be so well up he was in the habit of handling men. No man had a greater respect for the non-commissioned officer than himself. Non-commissioned officers were the backbone of our Army, and no praise was too high for the way in which they served. But he believed we should do wrong to lower the *status* of our commanding officers. The armies of those continental countries which maintained officers of a very high class were much more efficient than the armies of those countries where such was not the case. But while it would be a mistake to lower the *status* of our officers, it would be wise to encourage them and help them out in the way of expenses. As one who saw what was done by the Militia regiments in the late war, he desired to add his meed of praise to that which had been given to them. In physique they were not inferior to the Regulars, and for British pluck and endurance they were a credit to this country.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said that though it might be urged that the result of six months training of the Militia recruit might have some element of uncertainty, he hoped the experiment would not be limited to one year or to six months. It had been said that the character of the recruits obtained would deteriorate under this system; but it must not be forgotten that there were large industries, like the building trade, with its million of men, whose slack time was in the winter, and who could not engage in the summer, when work was most easy to find. From such trades we should be able to draw a large supply of the best kind of recruits. He should have thought that the artillery Militia was a class which might have been trained in the winter. Many of the difficulties which had been advanced against infantry training in the winter would be much less felt in the artillery. At Dunbar they could train regiments in barracks in winter quite as efficiently as under canvas in summer-time.

Mr. COCHRANE said the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had spoken very sympathetically in regard to rifle clubs. Might he point out that rifle clubs to be efficient must have ammunition? At present a very heavy tax was placed upon young fellows in having to pay something like a penny a shot. Could not the right hon. Gentleman find some method by which ammunition could be supplied at a less charge, or a certain number of cartridges provided free on reaching a certain standard of efficiency?

Mr. HALDANE said he did not think he could give any Answer now, but he should be glad to consult his hon. friend the Financial Secretary.

Question put, and agreed to.

£423,000, Imperial Yeomanry; Pay and Allowances.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) asked the Secretary of State for War for an explanation of the considerable reduction in the Vote this year, and what were his intentions with regard to the Yeomanry. He hoped it was not the right hon. Gentleman's intention in any way to reduce those forces. At the present time the force had reached a very high state of efficiency, and whatever some might think of Mr. Brodrick's scheme, there was no doubt that that portion of the scheme which dealt with the Imperial Yeomanry had proved a very great success, and the Yeomanry force was in a far better condition than ever before. With regard to the uniform, some of the new regiments were clothed in the horrible uniform known by the name of khaki. Khaki was all very well, but it was not fit for men to walk out in the streets in as full dress, and they objected to it most strongly. His regiment was among the sufferers. What the men liked was to have a smart kit in which they could walk out, and the result was that in the present year he was losing a considerable number of excellent men. Last year they had spent their annual training close to Scarborough, and in the town were encamped the Yorkshire Hussars who had an extremely smart walking-out kit—one of the smartest that any regiment in the country had. When his unfortunate men went into Scarborough town they found they could not compete at all with the Hussars. The ladies of Scarborough would pay no attention to the unfortunate Yeomen, but always insisted on walking out with the Hussars. He should like to ask if the right hon. Gentleman could not give his regiment some assistance and clothe them in a respectable and decent uniform. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would give this matter his very grave consideration. He should like also to suggest that it would be worthy of the attention of the Secretary of State to attach to the Yeomanry regiments during the annual training two Regular officers. He believed it would have the effect of keeping the regiments in a state of the highest efficiency and completely up-to-date.

Mr. HALDANE said the reason for the reduction of the Vote was that they had estimated only for the existing strength. With regard to the other point, he was bound to say he thought the Yeomanry did pretty well in the way of the money they received out of Imperial Funds, and he could not hold out any hopes that the State was going to assist them in the point of clothes.

*Mr. GIBBS (Bristol, W.) said he should like to associate himself with the remarks of the hon. Member for the Holderness Division in regard to the khaki uniform of the Yeomanry. He was glad to see that additional encouragement was to be given to the Yeomanry in the matter of teaching them how to ride and manage their rifles during manœuvring. It was impossible to expect a bad rider, after galloping over rough ground and being jumped about in the saddle, to shoot straight. It was eminently desirable that every facility should be given to the class of men from whom they got some of their best men, namely, clerks in towns, to make themselves as efficient as possible. The experience of the South African War very clearly demonstrated of what service the Imperial Yeomanry could be when they were properly trained. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not revise the present system of re-engagement for the Yeomanry. At the present moment after a man had served for three years he had to be re-engaged and medically examined each successive year, and many men objected to that system. For instance, if a man joined when he was seventeen years old and left when he was fifty, the present age limit, he would have to be re-engaged and medically examined twenty-nine times. As regarded training he thought that the present period was too long. He believed that if they had fourteen days they would get not only more men, but what was more important, more officers. If that was not possible some facility should be given to the commanding officers to give leave to the men and officers more frequently.

Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said there was one question with regard to the Yeomanry which he desired to bring to the notice of the Secretary of State for War; and it was very important if the Yeomanry were to be really an efficient fighting force. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had taken a very wise step in regard to the Volunteers and brigades, and he firmly believed that if the Yeomanry were to be an efficient force in case of emergency the same principle ought to be adopted for them. There ought to be appointed throughout the whole Yeomanry force brigadiers — preferably retired Army colonels—and under them a staff of Regular officers. Unless there were first-class Regular officers to instruct the Auxiliaries, those Auxiliaries in the day of trial would be little better than a useless mob. He would like to see for every three or four regiments of Yeomanry a brigadier appointed who should be responsible for the training of those regiments, and at the end of three years, or whatever period was fixed upon, the brigade ought to be brought together and inspected by a superior officer, and if the brigade showed any falling off in certain respects the blame would lie with the brigadier. Having served in the Yeomanry for twenty years he could assure hon. Members that under the present conditions it was extremely difficult for an officer, however willing, to bring his corps to a high state of efficiency. As to what was expected of the Yeomanry, they were supposed to know about horses, to be first-class shots, and to be able to take upon themselves the duties of cavalry and also of infantry. What happened under the present system? One year they were inspected by a distinguished cavalry officer whose one idea was cavalry tactics; his great idea was that the regiment should be very good at squadron drill; that the men should be able to ride in beautiful line and perform cavalry manœuvres in a highly efficient way. They did not know until a few days before the inspector came that they were to be inspected by a cavalry officer, and when he arrived he found fault because some of the manœuvres were not smartly done. In the following year an officer came whose one great idea was in regard to the work of mounted infantry, and he did not in the least care a bit about squadron drill or whether the men could ride in a straight line or not. That officer went in entirely for work in connection with mounting and dismounting and taking up positions. Possibly during the year the men had been getting instruction to meet the views of the cavalry inspector, and, special attention not having been given to mounting and dismounting work, a bad report was given. He thought, therefore, it was most important—he did not believe it would cost a very large sum—that brigadiers should be appointed for the different regiments of Yeomanry. Brigadiers ought also to be the inspecting officers. He was one of those who believed that if the Yeomanry were called out to serve in this country and they had not a brigadier and a brigadier staff, they would be almost useless. The only other alternative was to offer Yeomanry officers further facilities for improving their education. Since he had been in the Yeomanry he had been to three or four different schools of Yeomanry, and on each occasion he had been taught nothing but the elementary principles of drill. At Aldershot he practically did the work of a trooper while three or four of the biggest dunder-headed subalterns endeavoured to give instructions to the squadron as to how they should wheel. He considered that the whole of the time spent there was wasted. If he had been taught a certain amount of staff duty and other work than ordinary elementary drill he should have considered that he was doing work which would be of use. The number of schools should be increased and an effort should be made to build up a staff out of the Yeomanry officers. He was in favour of putting officers of the Regular force in high positions in the Auxiliary Forces. Some officers had said that they did not think it was necessary, and that if it were done it would create jealousy in the Auxiliary Forces. They said also that they could do the work as well as those who might be appointed as brigadiers. His opinion was absolutely different. If a Volunteer officer or Yeomanry colonel who went out for a fortnight's training in the course of the year was as capable as the man who made it the business of his life to be a soldier, what was the use of Regular officers going through a course of classes to learn their art? If the Auxiliary Forces were to be of use in time of war it was absolutely essential that those who held high commands should be Regular officers, and that they should have a staff of Regular officers as well. If the Auxiliary Forces had Regular officers who could draw up instructions and give orders, he did not believe that in England there would be any difficulty in getting transport. It would say very little for the patriotism of the people living in the country—farmers, traders, and others in the different localities—if they could not produce the few horses and carts necessary to get the men and their baggage to the points where foreign invasion might be threatened. To be a useful force in time of war it was absolutely necessary that the Yeomanry should be properly organised, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to accept the suggestion that brigadiers with proper staff should be provided for three or four regiments, even if the cost of doing so had to be met by making reductions in other directions.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) said the War Secretary had made a comparison between the cost of the Yeomanry now and the Yeomanry under the old system. He had shown that whereas the cost under the old system was £11 or £12 per man it had risen now to £20 or £30 per man. At all events the return the country got out of the modernised Yeomanry was far greater than the return it got under the old system. He submitted to the War Secretary that under any mobilisation scheme the Yeomanry—a regiment of which he had the honour to command—should be given a definite place. The work they would be expected to do and the part they would be expected to play in Imperial defence at home should be thoroughly understood by them beforehand. At present they possessed no such knowledge. It was an excellent thing that some system should be devised under which the services of competent officers would be available to supervise the work done by regiments and regularise their training under a definite scheme. He did not know that it was necessary to have regular officers for this work. He had known many Regular officers who had the supervision of the Volunteer force who had been infinitely worse soldiers than those who never had any regular training. When the demand for officers became severe during the South African war a large number of civilians who had never had such training went out and rendered excellent service. The best scheme available should be adopted in order to ensure complete and efficient training. He did not think that hard and fast rules, to be applicable to all regiments whatever part of the country they were in, should be laid down by head quarters. He suggested that where a man was competent to command his regiment much more discretion should be given to him than was given at the present time. He should be charged with the responsibility of producing a regiment efficient to do the work for which it was intended. If this were done the country would get a cheaper and more efficient force. The Imperial Yeomanry was a very valuable force for the defence of the country, and they could provide both officers and men fit for service abroad if they received the proper training. Unless it could be shown they got full value for their money the taxpayers of this country ought not to be called upon to pay for the Yeomanry. If the suggestions he had made were adopted the results would be satisfactory, not only to the country, but also to the taxpayer in the return he would get for his money.

Vote agreed to

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,244,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including Pay, etc., of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907."

*__Mr. McCRAE__ (Edinburgh, E.) said he had hoped that they might have had longer time to discuss the question of the Volunteers and to have heard from the Secretary for War a more definite pronouncement than had yet been made in regard to his policy in dealing with the Auxiliary Forces. He would, however, say at once that the administration of the Volunteer Force since the right hon. Gentleman had come into office had been such as to afford a sense of security to the Volunteers of the country which they had not enjoyed for some years past. He would like to know whether the policy of the right hon. Gentleman was to have a large Volunteer Force, and whether that policy would maintain the present standard of efficiency. The statement which the right hon. Gentleman made in regard to the nebulous force which was to be behind the Volunteers—and which he hoped would remain nebulous—did not satisfy him. He had no faith in an armed mob, or even in rifle clubs. If we were to have an efficient reserve, either for home defence or as a stand-by for the Army, that force must have some considerable training. If the young men of the country did not have the training of Volunteers, the other organisations would be of little use. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must have taken a hint from the scheme of the Canadian Militia or of the Japanese Army which had five different grades, the lowest of which were not trained at all in arms. As to camp allowances, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon made certain proposals after Parliament rose last year which did not meet with the approbation of the Volunteers. But there was one point in the right hon. Gentleman's proposals which commended itself to all interested in the Volunteer Force. That was that every Volunteer should have the opportunity of going into camp for fourteen days. No doubt the grant was to be reduced for fourteen days men, while the grant to the men who went into camp for seven days was to be increased. He would like the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War to say whether the allowance of every Volunteer who went into camp for fourteen days was to be 5s. a day; and that every man who went into camp for seven days was to be paid 3s. 6d. a day. Then the medical circular issued by the right hon. Member for Croydon was considered by many Volunteer officers to be illegal, but in the performance of their duty they acted upon it. That circular had been withdrawn, but some men had suffered on account of the illegal demand made upon them by the War Office. The right hon. Member for Croydon had said that there was no compulsion laid upon individual Volunteers by that circular, but the late Financial Secretary to the War Office stated that it was compulsory in so far as supplying information was concerned. Certain non-commissioned officers had been degraded from their rank and privates had been dismissed from their corps because of non-compliance with the demand of that illegal circular. He wished to have the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that those men who had wrongfully suffered would be reinstated. There was an impression abroad that the right hon. Gentleman had an idea that a large number of men should be enrolled in a citizen army, and that the conditions in regard to their efficiency should be relaxed. He hoped there was no intention of reducing the standard of efficiency in the Volunteer Force.

Sir H. AUBREY-FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) said he would like to say a few words in connection with the force with which he had been associated for a longer period, he believed, than any other Member of this House. He was one of the founders of the Volunteer Force in 1859, and had watched it throughout its career, although he was no longer an active member of it. In the early days of the Volunteer Force it was composed of men of quite a different social *status* than at present. They found their own uniform, their own rifles, their own ammunition, and paid for their drill instructors. But as time went on a different class of men joined the Volunteer Army, and great difficulties arose because men who ought to have been serving in the Militia joined it. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would see, when he came to consider the whole Volunteer question, what he could do to put the Volunteer Force on a sound footing. For many years past the Volunteers had suffered owing to the various schemes which had been brought forward in regard to them by the War Office; and there was great disquietude throughout all ranks. The result was that the numbers of the Volunteer Army had diminished considerably. He believed that if the force were put on a sound footing it might be brought up into a state of efficiency such as the Secretary of State for War and the War Office would be satisfied with. There were some points of the right hon. Gentleman's statement with which he was in cordial agreement. The Secretary of State for War had said that brigadiers would be appointed to the force—men generally selected from the Regular Army. He was glad to see in the Estimates this year that there was an increase of the sum allotted for the formation of brigades on a more satisfactory footing than at present. The Estimates this year showed a sum of £10,000 for enlarging the staff of the Volunteer brigades as against £1,800 last year. Having served as brigadier for a great many years he could claim to have some knowledge, and he was sure it would be for the benefit of the force if brigadiers were selected from the Regular Army. But this must be taken into consideration. The officer selected as brigadier should have the full instruction of the Volunteers under his command during the whole year and not only during the week that the Volunteer brigade was in camp. Up to the present time a brigadier, such as he himself had been, had had nothing whatever to do with those under his command except for a week in the year. He had no return presented to him. He had no knowledge of the number of men of the various battalions, and then at the expiration of the week's camp, on the inspection day, he had to hand over his brigade to an inspecting officer, who might have no knowledge whatever of Volunteers or their requirements. He could recollect a commander being sent who had spent many years in India and had never seen a Volunteer. It was most desirable to have brigadiers appointed who should have full command of their brigades during the whole year, and should be allowed, when the day of inspection came, to inspect the different battalions of their brigade. They were the men who had or ought to have a thorough knowledge of the Volunteers, and who could report and inspect just as well as some of the colonels who were sent on inspection days without any knowledge whatever. He wished, if he might, to say a few words with regard to rifle clubs, in which he took a great interest. He was happy to say they were progressing, and that there were now some 700 affiliated to the National Rifle Association, of which he had been chairman for many years. As far as he could tell they were doing well. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would do what he could to help these clubs by way of granting ammunition and acceding to other requests which they made.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) wished to call attention to a matter which seriously affected the Volunteer battalions in the Highland counties. For instance, the area of Argyll and Bute was 100 miles long by sixty broad, and it was enormously difficult to maintain efficiency in the battalions of Volunteers spread over such a wide area. The artillery corps were also armed with old muzzle loading guns.

And, it being half-Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENTS) BILL.

(BY ORDER.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said that as one who had consistently opposed tramways being brought over Westminster Bridge and down the Embankment, not only on the merits of the scheme but because the representative local authority of the district for which he sat had always requested him to do so, he would like to say a few words at this final stage of the discussion. He would not go over the many reasons that had in former times been urged against it. There were, however, two which he thought it was sufficient to mention in order to dismiss. It had been alleged that people who had carriages and horses objected to these tramways because they interfered with their pleasure. It had also been alleged that for some occult reason they desired to see poor people trudge in the rain and mud over the bridge. He thought he might put such arguments aside. The real reason for their objections was that they considered the great and complicated problem of London locomotion ought to be viewed as a whole, and that it had not been established that tramways in such a position were the best means of dealing with it. Their doubts had been increased by the many different and conflicting forms in which the London County Council had brought this proposal before the House. First it was a project to cross Westminster Bridge and go along the Embankment to Blackfriars; then it was a project to cross the bridge only and transfer the block at the south side to the north side, close to that House; then they had proposed a tramway to Waterloo Bridge only; and then they proposed to lay the tramway on the Embankment only from nowhere to nowhere. All this showed either that the London County Council did not know its own mind or that it had some purpose which was not disclosed. The arguments used on behalf of the proposal were equally conflicting. During the earlier stages the whole argument was that it was necessary, after bringing the public across the bridge, to take them along the Embankment to the city. But they had found that of all the omnibuses belonging to competing companies, which were always looking out for new routes, not one ever turned towards the city. Then it was pretended that they wanted to link up the south with the north. But there was no point within practical distance on the north side to link to. Later on, the scheme of a tramway down the new street from Holborn to the Embankment, came into view; and he was quite prepared to admit that now that project was nearing completion, it afforded a justification for the proposal now before the House. But the Royal Commission on London Traffic was then appointed. While that Commission was sitting and actually taking evidence on this very project, and before it had reported, the London County Council twice brought in this Bill and sought to forestall the decision of the Commission by the action of that House. That was the case last session. When the Bill was before the House the Commission had not reported and the division resulted in a tie, the Speaker giving his casting vote in favour of the Bill for the express purpose, as he stated, that the House might have another opportunity of considering it. The Bill was rejected by the House of Lords and he, for one, thought that the outcry got up against the House of Lords on that account was quite unreasonable. Surely there could not be a case in which the House of Lords was so legitimately free to exercise its discretion as one dealing with a subject on which a Royal Commission had not yet reported and on which the lower House had been equally divided. The Commission reported in favour of an extension of the tramway system. But by that time an entirely new factor in the problem had come into view in the shape of the motor omnibus. No one who had been in the former House of Commons could accuse him of holding a brief for motors. He hated motors, he had not got one and never used them—except at an election. But although the motor omnibus had yet only been tried on a small scale, it was evident it was destined to play an important part in London locomotion; and those who believed, as he did, that the real solution of that problem lay in tubes for long distances, tramways for the outer districts and broad roads, and motor omnibuses for the more central and crowded thoroughfares, were justified in attaching great importance to this new means of conveyance. He remembered that while as early as the 1904 debate on this subject, he was arguing this proposition, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board threw an interjection across the House—"Motor 'buses are done for already." [Mr. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear!] What a prophecy! In addition to the large number of motor omnibuses already on the streets he understood there were something like ten times that number now on order. The Road Car Company had raised £60,000 for motor omnibuses, and he believed the London General Omnibus Company was about to raise £500,000 for the same purpose. There could not be a moment's question that motors were destined to play an ever increasing part in the solution of this problem. They were much faster in crowded traffic; their flexible line of progression caused far less blocking and inconvenience; when streets were blocked or in repair they could be diverted, so as not to suspend the public service; they could follow the changed current and volume of traffic and no one could deny that in a great city like London, changes of that kind were constantly occurring. They had two other advantages of greater importance. They did not require a great capital outlay in laying tram lines, an outlay which, once it was applied to a fixed route, was buried there and could never be recovered if the route was abandoned or the traffic became less or some other means of locomotion—tubes, railways, and the like—supplanted the use of the tramcar. Secondly, being in the nature of private or private corporate enterprise, they involved that healthy principle of competition which was the surest safeguard of the public interest, as to cheapness and efficiency. But they had one great disadvantage which, in the eyes of the London County Council, outweighed all the claims he had spoken of. They did not involve a great and risky outlay of the ratepayers' capital, and they did not secure to the London County Council a great body of labour which, when elections came, would vote for the promoters of the scheme. They did not play any part in that policy of Socialism which had been ingeniously transferred from Hyde Park to municipal bodies, To that policy he had always given, and always would give, a determined opposition. But on this occasion the Westminster City Council had not requested him to oppose the Bill; and in the recent election he found that a certain number of his poorer constituents were in favour of the trams being brought over Westminster Bridge. For those high reasons of State he would not vote against the Bill.

Mr. Burdett-Coutts.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) congratulated the hon. Member on the rather graceful manner in which he had accepted the inevitable. It had been a long and gallant fight, extending over sixteen years, and had ended in the right being given to the people of London to use their roads to the best advantage. In passing from this point he desired to pay a real tribute to the aims and genius of those put up to oppose and fight this scheme. The arguments first used by them were that it would spoil the artistic effect of the slender lines of Westminster Bridge if cars were brought over it. But that argument disappeared when it was pointed out that omnibuses were just as ugly. Then came the argument that what might be termed the umbrageous solitudes of the Thames Embankment would be invaded by the rattle of tramcars and the clanging of bells, and that that was not desirable. That argument was eventually given up. Then there was the Royal Commission on London Traffic for whose Report they had had to wait. They eventually got the Report last year, before the Bill was discussed in another place. The hon. Member had said that the Members of the Upper House were entitled to throw out the Bill because they had not the Report of the Royal Commission before them, but that was not accurate. As a matter of fact the Bill was thrown out by the Upper House without any practical discussion. The mover of its rejection said that the Bill merely proposed to take people for a little pleasure trip on the Embankment, and on those grounds it was rejected. The hon. Member was aware with what indignation the population of London received that verdict. They had now, however, got to the end of the struggle and he was much obliged to the hon. Member for the graceful manner in which he had accepted the position. It was right, in the opinion of 5,000,000 of the people of London, that these trams should come over the bridge. It was the determination of the London boroughs, of the London County Council, and of this House that they should come over, and he would suggest to the London County Council that they should proceed at once with this great scheme and confer this unspeakable boon on London.

MR. BAKER (Finsbury, E.) said the hon. Member for Westminster had made one or two statements with regard to motor omnibuses, and with regard to the action and the reasons of the County Council in promoting this measure which should be, he thought, referred to. One of the County Council's electric tramcars carried double the number of passengers carried by a motor omnibus. In the early morning about 4,000 persons alighted at the tramway terminus at Westminster, and while sixty tramcars would be sufficient to carry these passengers over the bridge it would require 120 motor omnibuses to do the same work. At the Elephant and Castle 440 tramcars passed a given point in a single hour, and the number of motor omnibuses required to carry the same number of passengers would be 900. Therefore, from the point of view of the congestion of traffic, the tramways had the advantage. Again, the cost of the tramcar was about 6d. or 7d. a mile, as against 11d. or 1s. a mile in the case of the motor omnibus. He had just received a message from the chief tramway officer of the County Council stating that in his opinion they were not seriously affected by the motor omnibuses. The tramway receipts were steadily increasing, and they only required more power and a through service over the bridges to make the opposition a negligible quantity. He also reminded the House that on this occasion the County Council were in the position of having the hearty co-operation of the City.

*MR. NEILD (Middlesex, Ealing) congratulated the hon. Member for East Finsbury, whose experience in these matters was considerable, on the speech he had made in support of this Bill. Speaking also in support of the Bill, but from a different standpoint, since he was in no sense interested in the question of over-bridge tramways, he thought, so far as the Edgware Road part of the scheme was concerned, that it would greatly facilitate the action of those who desired by means of these light railways to secure a better means of communication with London. At present Edgware was very badly served, being wholly dependent on the Great Northern Railway, whose line went through Finsbury Park and Finchley, and whose service left much to be desired. The proposal of Middlesex which was contained in the Bill that would follow this was to make a direct connection with London by a line of trams along the Edgware Road, by doing which they would confer a very great benefit on the population. The boundary of the two counties of Middlesex and London was for some distance down, the centre of the Edgware Road, between Kilburn and Brondesbury, and it was most desirable that the Councils of both counties, as well as of the Borough of Hampstead and the urban district of Willesden, should be in agreement, especially on the question of the necessary widenings. The objections urged by the hon. Member for Westminster had been heard more than once from the Conservative side of the House. Whatever might be said about the motor omnibus being best adapted for the streets of inner London, he thought that the system of electric tramways was that best adapted to deal with suburban traffic. But his objection with regard to the control of these lines by a local authority was the fact that the large body of municipal employees might be manipulated at times of election to the interest of the municipal body, but this consideration did not apply to the County Council of Middlesex. Under the agreement which was mentioned in the Middlesex County Council Tramways Bill, the Middlesex County Council had arranged for the line to be worked by a private company on terms which would give the Council and the company a good rate of interest on their capital expenditure, and under all circumstances the arrangement ought to be very beneficial to both the parties, securing as it did a preferential rate of interest to the County Council of Middlesex, and an ultimate share of the profits to be derived from the undertaking, an arrangement which already applied to all the existing lines of the Council in the county. He ventured to hope that no further opposition would be offered to this Bill, but that it would now be sent to a Committee, and finally passed, in which case it would supply facilities much needed by Londoners.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN

Burns, Battersea) said he rose to take this opportunity of saying a few words, because of the extraordinary spectacle which the House had witnessed this evening on the termination of what might be called the battle of the bridges. It was to the credit of all, and particularly to the credit of the hon. Member for Westminster, who had led the van in this fight against the population of London in this matter. He had now given up his policy of opposition and said he did not intend to take any part in opposing the tramways coming over Westminster Bridge. They then had the remarkable fact that the name of the senior representative for London, whose absence they all deplored, was on the back of the Bill. That was followed by the still more extraordinary fact that the representative of one of the Divisions of the County of Middlesex had joined hands with the City of Westminster and the City of London and had appealed for the Bill. Surely their happiness was overdone, and as one of the hon. Members who from the back benches had preached in favour of this Bill, and who saw the fruition of one of those useful schemes which had been too long delayed, he wished from the vantage ground of the Treasury Bench to say how glad he was that the City of London had taken a more useful way of serving the citizens of this vast Metropolis than it did thirteen or fourteen years ago. Moreover, although the hon. Member for the City of Westminister had made reparation rather late in the day, he forgave him for his past. He also welcomed the support of the hon. Member for Ealing, who, in making his first speech on this subject, had joined hands with the London County Council, and he would only say he was sure that the hon. Member would regret that the Middlesex County Council had not had the prescience of the London County Council in this matter and taken steps to own and work by their own men the London tramways. Five years hence there would be no regrets for the course which the House was taking, and now it was roses, roses, all the way. They would, he hoped, get over Westminster Bridge. He trusted the House would allow the tramway to go down the Embankment in order to link up the north with the south. He believed that the scheme would lead to the people both in the south and in the north having greater access to the river. It would also, he thought, give workmen that greater mobility which they ought to have in a place like London. It would give them freedom to get to and fro from their work and to convey their wives and children to every part of London. From every point of view he thought the Bill would receive the blessings of all Londoners, even of those by whom it had hitherto been condemned. It had indeed come as a boon and a blessing to London, and he believed that London would be thankful and pleased to all sections of the House of Commons for coming to so sensible a decision, although it had been long delayed.

Mr. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness) said he should like just for a few moments to address the House upon the Bill before it—not because he had any particular interest in the business, but because at the present moment he was one of those who were suffering from a very bad dose of private enterprise. For many years now he had been living in Hampstead, and if this House sat to an unreasonable hour, as it did quite recently, it meant that he had to walk no less than four miles because of the lack of system which existed in regard to the tramway arrangements. As to the motor omnibuses it was a common sight to see them broken down at the side of the road and of no use to anybody who wished to travel. When one wanted to cross London from the north to the south or vice versa it took an hour and a half. One might just as well live ninety miles out of London, as if one did it would be possible to travel the distance in the same time. He was delighted to be present to see an end put to the opposition to the London County Council system, and he hoped the people of London would appreciate what was being done for them. It would be a great advantage to the people to be able to get to and from their work quickly and cheaply, and it was obvious that working men could not afford to call a hansom when they were going to work in the morning.

Question put, and agreed to.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1906–7.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £212,756, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1907, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he noticed in the Estimates an item of £1,200, which showed an increase of £100 over the preceding year. He understood that this was in connection with quit rents in connection with the woods and forests and foreshores in Ireland. He believed that several tens of thousands of pounds of these quit rents were appropriated and lodged in a common fund, but he was unable to understand the mysterious system which the Treasury adopted towards Ireland. The policy seemed to be one of heads they won and tails Ireland lost, and every point was taken againstthe poorer country. Although the Treasury had frequently been questioned as to the way these quit rents were applied, no satisfactory answer had been obtained. Irish Members had a right to know how much of this money received from Ireland was appropriated by the Treasury. The right to the enjoyment of the foreshore was, he submitted, the common right of the community, and he complained that in Ireland this right had been filched away. In Ireland, which had a very large seacoast and a great number of estuaries, only £2,725 was spent around its shores, whereas ten times that amount was spent in England.

MR. ROGERS (Wiltshire, Devizes) said he wished to raise one or two points in regard to Crown lands. He was strongly interested in the necessity of land reform and was himself interested in some 5,000 or 6,000 acres of land. There was in the country a general concensus of opinion that it was desirable that instead of going into towns the agricultural population should be retained on the land. The President of the Board of Agriculture had himself made many experiments which had this object in view, and there was a great body of evidence contained in Rider Haggard's "Rural England" which went to show the importance of small holdings. If a stimulus was given to the movement for the creation of small holdings it would induce men to remain on the lands. He had studied the statistics of pauperism in villages where small holdings were prevalent and where the land was let in one or two large farms, and in nearly every case the statistics were in favour of the villages in which there were small holdings. He thought that the Crown lands should be used as far as possible for the purpose of creating small holdings. He asked that in future the Commissioners of Woods and Forests should pursue a more human policy and see that the Crown lands were used for the welfare of the people who lived in the country. He wanted a more progressive land policy to be carried out by this Department. He did not want to be harsh to the sitting tenants, but he did say that when, from time to time, farms were given up they should be used to carry out a policy of establishing small holdings. If the Commissioners could let the land at an increased rental, he had no doubt that that result would be satisfactory to them, and he held that when a farm was vacant this principle of small holdings could be applied without any hardship to anybody, and without disturbing the sitting tenant. There was no reason to believe that a policy of this kind would be any less satisfactory from the point of view of income than that under which Crown lands were now administered. It was almost the universal experience of those who lived in country districts that land which was let in small quantities realised a larger return than that which was let in large quantities. Everybody who had been in agricultural districts, moreover, would know that the land which had made the greatest loss was the land which was let in the form of large farms. The rent paid for small farms, however, was out of all proportion to their value. The same policy of establishing small holdings should be pursued in regard to sales and purchases of land. During the last fifty years of the last century he noticed from the reports that more than £3,000,000 worth of land was bought and more than £3,000,000 worth of land was sold. That was an intelligible policy if the idea was to consolidate these lands in the hands of the Crown, and he did not think that anybody would object to its being carried out, but he did hope that when that course was pursued the greatest care would be taken not to extinguish small freeholds, and it should not be done with a view of amalgamating farms and buying up a small holding here and there in order to add it to a large farm with a view of increasing the rent. He urged that the Commissioners might with some of the Crown lands make a beginning with a scheme of national afforestation. He knew some Crown lands in his own district which for ordinary agricultural purposes were not worth more than 2s. 6d. an acre. He was talking as a practical farmer, and he was sure that some of the land would be much better utilised in making the beginning of a national system of afforestation such as he contemplated. We in this respect fell much behind all foreign nations. Another point he should like to mention was that there was some reason to believe that Crown lands were let in large holdings and the tenant of the large holding was in the habit of letting again to small holders and allotment holders. He could not help thinking that that was not a good practice, as everybody who held Crown lands ought to have the advantage of holding them direct from the Crown, and no middleman should be allowed to make a profit out of them. Then there was the question of tied cottages as to which a good deal could be said on both sides. He knew in Wiltshire tied cottages as cottages which were let with the farm. The occupant sometimes received his cottage rent free and sometimes he paid a small rent for it, but it was a definite condition of his employment, and if he had any dispute with his employer he was liable to be called upon to leave his cottage at a fortnight's notice. This system had caused widespread discontent and grievance, and was, he thought, the cause to a great extent of that migration from the villages to the towns which they all deplored. On the other hand he was quite willing to recognise the fact that it was only reasonable that on an outlying farm a farmer should have on his hands cottages for stockmen, shepherds, and others, who were necessary for the conduct of his business. That, however, was a practice which ought not to be carried to excess, and when in a village all the cottages were tied to the various farms he thought that that was carrying the practice too far, and it certainly caused great discontent. He hoped that those responsible for Crown lands would seek to secure the welfare and happiness not only of the tenant, but also of those who lived under him. They were told that the State should be a model employer and he wanted them to be a model landlord. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Rogers.*)

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) congratulated the hon. Gentleman upon his speech, which showed that the villagers were in no need of a champion in that House. There was always a good deal of red tape in the administration of the Woods and Forests Department, but he hoped the Government would use all its influence to get rid of this red tape in the interests of the village population. They had now a President of the Board of Agriculture who did really know something about the question of land and small holdings and allotments, and the proposal was that the 4,000 odd acres of land which the Government had at their disposal should be handed over to the Board of Agriculture to be split up. He hoped this would be done, and that the Department would have power to exercise their powers in any way they saw fit. They had the power under the Act of 1866. When he and the President of the Local Government Board fought side by side in 1879 during the dock strike they had difficulty in dealing with the influx of labourers into town, and the men said it was all very well to grumble to them for coming to town to take the place of the dock labourers at fivepence an hour; they were content to let the dock labourers go and take their places in the village and live in a hut upon 10s. a week. Here was a chance for the Government to use its land in the very best possible way, and to set an example as to how this difficulty should be met. He felt some jealousy of Ireland, because under the Labourers Acts boards of guardians could provide cottages and the occupant had not to work for the farmer in the immediate neighbourhood or even for the owner of the land. Was it not wonderful that in this enlightened land no provision of the kind existed? In the London workhouses there were 2,500 men capable of working who had been pushed out by the influx of strong healthy men from the country who commended themselves to employers, who thought they were not only stronger than London men, but were more innocent and would do more work. He wished to keep the men in the cottages, and did not believe in men being driven to migrate against their wills.

The Government could do what they liked with the foreshores belonging to the Crown. The Act of 1866 set forth exactly what they could and ought to do. Yet there were men idling away their time and wasting their manhood when they might be usefully and profitably employed in improving the foreshores of the kingdom. Here was a profitable work, which might be started without delay. When it was said that there was no work for people to do he contended that there was plenty, and it was only the fear of interfering with the surplus labour of the country that stood in the way. For his part he wanted to get rid of the surplus labour, which was a social evil.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said he joined in the congratulations to the hon. Member for East Wiltshire for having brought forward a matter of great importance, and one by which the Government might effect a great deal of improvement in the agricultural districts. The Government had wide areas of land upon which an experiment might be made not only with small holdings and allotments but in other directions for employing labour. The cry of rural depopulation was being continually re-echoed, and up to the present time there had been found only one remedy, namely, the creation of small holdings and allotments. The remarkable fact was brought out by the last census that the only purely agricultural district in England which had not lost its population in the last decennial census was a district in which small holdings and allotments were provided in much larger proportion than in other districts of the country. The developments in this respect in the Holland division of Lincoln showed what could be done. When the Allotments Act began to be in operation there were about 130 acres of land given up to allotments. By 1905 there were between 2,000 and 3,000 acres given over to this beneficent purpose through the application of the Allotments and Parish Councils Acts. In the early days of the county council, that authority was approached, and by the exertions of the hon. Member for South-West Norfolk about 180 acres of land were obtained and cut up into small holdings; afterwards, through the kindly interest of the President of the Board of Agriculture, some 500 or more acres. The consequence was seen at the next census, for it was the only rural district in England that had not declined in population. The Government had the opportunity of putting people back on the land belonging to the Crown, the first object of which land should be the benefit of the whole nation. In the last Parliament he endeavoured to get the Woods and Forests Commissioners to enter upon this question in the spirit which he had indicated, and he raised the question in this House as to whether these Crown lands should be divided into small holdings. What happened? A farm fell vacant in the very district to which he had alluded, and the hon. Member for South West Norfolk made an application, and he himself made an application in this House, but they did not get it, although they offered the Commissioners to take the farm at the rental they fixed. They proposed to put a proper tenant in the farmhouse, and to use the cottages and all the farm buildings for the benefit of the small holdings into which the farm was to be cut; but the reply was that it would not be to the interest of the Crown estate to divide the farm in this way. The Commissioners put the farm up for public tender, and one of the tenants of a Crown farm got it, thus adding a second farm to his jurisdiction. By that means labour was displaced, because wherever one farm was added to another the agricultural labourer suffered. It sent labour into the towns, where the price of labour was lowered, whereas it would better the condition of life in towns as well as in the country if they could establish more small holdings. An opportunity was now given to the administration which he hoped would be taken advantage of to carry forward a beneficent policy, and he hoped the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, stimulated by hon. Members in this House, would carry out that policy and endeavour, wherever land became vacant, to see that it was utilised for putting people back on the soil.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said he desired as an Irish Member to ask the Financial Secretary of the Treasury the exact amount spent on Ireland in connection with the Woods and Forests Department. It was very difficult indeed to follow the hon. Gentleman's figures. He was a very good Unionist, and as an Irish Member he did not object to being identified with the Empire. But Scotland, Ireland, and the Isles of Man and Alderney seemed to be mixed up in a very hopeless way in these figures. The Commissioners in the English office appeared to be paid very high salaries. So far as he could gather, the very highest salary paid to a Commissioner in Dublin was £580, as against £1,200 in London. The principal clerks in London received £900; but in Dublin the first-class clerks only got £400. This seemed a very unfair disproportion of salaries in the same departments in London and Dublin.

*MR. WINFREY (Norfolk, S.W.) said the proposal to use Crown lands more for small holdings was not a new one. So long as twelve years ago he had an interview with the late Sir William Harcourt, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer—he believed it was in 1894—and pointed out various farms in South Lincolnshire which he thought might be utilised for small holdings. Sir William Harcourt was quite in sympathy with the suggestion, and he believed that if the Liberal Government of that time had lasted a little longer there would have been a more sympathetic management of the subject by the Department of Woods and Forests. The fact was that that Department was entirely out of sympathy with the movement, and he ventured to say they were not managing their estates, so far as he knew, in South Lincolnshire, in the most business-like way. If these lands were let to small holders they would let at 25 per cent. more rent than at the present time. The association with which he was connected would be prepared, whenever any of the Crown farms in South Lincolnshire became vacant, to rent them at 25 per cent. more rental than the tenants were now paying. For twelve years they had been making attempts to get hold of these Crown farms, but he was sorry to say they had not succeeded in getting an acre of Crown land in South Lincolnshire for small holdings. The reason seemed to him to be that the office of Woods and Forests found it was a simpler process not to cut up a farm into small holdings. Some years ago he and others formed a South Lincolnshire Small Holdings Association. One of the Crown farms became vacant only last Michaelmas and it was suitable for small holdings. They put in a proper application and pledged themselves to pay the same rent that the outgoing tenant was paying. They said they would not ask anything to be done in adapting buildings to small holdings, but that if they could get a lease for seven or fourteen years they would do that themselves. The answer they received was that it would be to the detriment of the estate, and the officials immediately put out tenders to let the farm, the successful applicant being a gentleman who already had a farm under the Crown and two or three other farms not under the Crown. He might safely say they would have been prepared to have paid a little more rent than the outgoing tenant to have obtained that farm. The office of Woods and Forests had at different times sold portions of their Crown lands, and they had at the present time £750,000 invested in Consols. If that were so there need be no difficulty about putting further houses and buildings upon the present Crown lands, because they had the money without going to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did hope now that they had a progressive Government they would have a progressive policy with reference to this land question, and he trusted the result of this debate would be that they would get quickly to work. He suggested that the small houses and buildings which might be erected on these farms might be done by a gradual process, and he was certain that if the Woods and Forests Commissioners would spend some of their money in that way they would get a return of at least four per cent. on it. He believed that what was true of his own district was true of the whole country, and he ventured to hope they would have a satisfactory answer from the Government to-night with reference to the future management of these Crown Lands.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.) said the criticism which had been directed against the Department of Woods and Forests placed him in somewhat of a difficulty. He agreed entirely with the views expressed by the hon. Member for East Wiltshire. His hon. friend made a speech with every word of which he could assure him, on behalf of the Government, that the Government was in full sympathy, but when he said that the Committee would understand it was somewhat difficult for him to reply to the criticism which had been directed against the Department. If he answered these criticisms and showed hon. Members that they had been, at any rate to a considerable extent, mistaken in the views they had expressed, it might immediately be argued that he was really not in sympathy with the views which had been expressed so forcibly. It was, however, his duty to explain that several of the charges made were based, he thought, on an inaccurate understanding of what was the true position of the Woods and Forests Commissioners. In the first place it must be remembered, notwithstanding that his hon. friend the Member for Woolwich waved a book at his head and said that in that book would be found authority to the Treasury to do what they pleased with the Crown lands, that the Treasury had no such authority. He had read the Act of 1866, and it contained not a word authorising the Treasury to deal with the Crown lands as they pleased. The fact was, the Commissioners of Woods and Forests were a statutory body holding authority under an Act of George IV. By that Act the Commissioners were bound to administer the Crown estates for the advantage of the Crown. It was not national property. His hon. friend asked that the people should be put back on their own land, a sentiment with which he entirely sympathised, but it so happened that this particular part of the land did not belong to the people. It was the Crown land which was administered on behalf of the Crown and which, theoretically at any rate, reverted to the Crown on the demise of the Sovereign. Under the Acts by which the Crown Land Commissioners were given their power they were bound to administer the property in the interests of the Crown, and consequently they were not at liberty to make all sorts of experiments, however valuable those experiments might be on other grounds, if they were satisfied at the time that those experiments would not be for the benefit of the property itself. The hon. Member for South West Norfolk raised a case which had been referred to by the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division. It was the case of a farm of 500 acres in a somewhat out-of-the-way district on the edge of the Wash. It was proposed that this property should be let to the Lincolnshire Small Holdings Association at the same rent as had been paid by the late tenant.

MR. WINFREY: We also asked to be allowed to tender.

MR. MCKENNA said upon that point he was not in a position to answer his hon. friend. The Commissioners had to consider, first of all, whether in their judgment the land was suited to be split up into small holdings, and, secondly, whether it was better that the property of the Crown should be let in one farm. It might very well have been that this land was suitable for cutting up, but they were bound by statute to consider whether it was better that it should be let in one farm, and they came to the conclusion that the second course was better. They subsequently put up this farm for tender and the highest tender was from a gentleman who already held a farm in the immediate neighbourhood. This gentleman applied for the farm at a higher rent for his son, whom he was going to put into the farm. He was himself an excellent tenant, and the Commissioners had therefore a guarantee that they were letting their farm not only for a higher rent than was proposed by the Lincolnshire Small Holdings Association, but to a tenant in whom they had every confidence. Under those circumstances, however desirable it might be that the farm should be let for small holdings, he submitted that so long as the law stood as at present the Commissioners were bound to let the farm in the way that they did. He was informed that after the reply of the Commissioners no further communication was made by his hon. friend or the Lincolnshire Small Holdings Association. As the hon. Gentleman informed him he was anxious to tender he accepted it from him, but he was informed that as a matter of fact no communication was made. The hon. Member for Woolwich had asked about the administration of the foreshores. A great part of the foreshores was not under the control of the Woods and Forests Commissioners. The very Act which the hon. Gentleman had quoted handed over the jurisdiction to the Board of Trade, and the only foreshores remaining under the authority of the Woods and Forests Commissioners were those which were let prior to the Act of 1866.

MR. CROOKS said as the hon. Gentleman had challenged his opinion, he would point out that under Clause 1 they could do anything with the land so long as it would realise the income, and their contention was that it would be better for the purpose of realising that income to let the land as had been suggested.

☛ MR. MCKENNA said a question had been raised by the hon. Member for East Wiltshire as to re-afforestation. He thought in that respect the hon. Member was a little severe in his criticism. Re-afforestation had already been established in several places, and to his own knowledge on the Crown lands in Wales a considerable amount of such work was being done. He did not know that his hon. friend had in his mind any case of land suitable for planting which was not being planted. If he had he should be very glad to hear of it, because one of the difficulties at present was to find suitable land. When they did find it, efforts were constantly made to plant it, and he could assure his hon. friend that those efforts would be continued. The hon. Member for North Cork had raised the question as to the amount being spent upon and received out of these Crown lands in Ireland. The hon. Member spoke of this money being essentially Irish money, and asked how much was being given back for Irish purposes. He could only answer that this money, like all other revenue, went into the common purse. He was afraid if the money which was spent in Ireland were to be exclusively confined to money which was obtained from Ireland, Ireland would not come off so well as it did now, because as a matter of fact more money was spent in Ireland in proportion to the revenue raised than was spent in England, Scotland and Wales in proportion to the sum raised. As things stood at present, therefore, hon. Gentlemen from Ireland would be ill-advised to insist that all money raised in Ireland should be spent there; otherwise they would surely raise a cry on behalf of England and Scotland that all money raised in those countries should be spent in the countries where it was raised. The hon. Member for North Down had asked about the salaries in the department of Woods and Forests.

He thought the hon. Gentleman must be under a misapprehension. In both England and Ireland the minimum salaries of first-class clerks was £300 and the maximum £400.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said the chief officer in London received £1,200 and the principal clerk £900, as against £580 and £400 in the Irish offices. They might call the positions what they liked, but the Commissioner in Dublin only received £580 while the corresponding individual in London got £1,200, and the principal clerk only received £400, as against £900.

MR. McKENNA said the argument of the hon. Gentleman was that no matter what the size of the office in Dublin was, the chief was to have the same salary as in the London office, which was ten times the size. If that were so he had no answer to give the hon. Gentleman. So far as clerks of the same rank were concerned, identically the same salaries were paid in both offices. The Head Office was in London, and consequently the Commissioners and principal clerks were also in London. If they were in Dublin of course they would be paid higher salaries. As a matter of fact the superintendent in Dublin got exactly the same salary as the senior clerk in London, the ranks corresponding. The hon. Member for Woolwich had asked whether an arrangement could be made whereby the powers of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests with regard to agricultural land under their control could be exercised in conjunction with the Board of Agriculture. He could only say at the present moment that the subject had been under the consideration of the Government. It was not yet clearly determined on what conditions such a change could be made, nor was it yet quite certain whether the change could be made at all without a new Act of Parliament. Subject to that he could assure his hon. friend that any change which would enable the Commissioners to act with greater freedom and be calculated to make the policy more consistent with the views of hon. Members would certainly be adopted by the Government. That was all he could say at the present moment.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) said there was one question in connection with the Crown lands which he should like to ask. He had been looking into this question since Parliament met, with the view of getting some information as to whether any of these lands could be utilised for the purposes of the Distress Committees and for the purpose of creating small holdings. It seemed to him that it was quite unnecessary to go far afield to obtain rights to confiscate the property of other parties and pay the high prices which agents generally asked when selling land for these purposes, when there was so large a quantity of Crown lands at the disposal of the Government. He could not say that it was easy to get information in these cases. He had to drag out the information by two or three Questions. He found from the Report of 1905 that the gross rental from these properties was £513,000, but there was no information in the Report to show how much were farm lands and how much were mining properties. He was then referred to other Reports for the information he desired, and with a little diligence he was able to discover that there were 70,000 acres of farm lands in twenty-four counties of England with an average rental of £1 4s. per acre. Therefore it was quite clear that there was a large amount of land at their disposal for the purposes of the Distress Committees and the creation of small holdings. As to the farm lands, the first thing one had to consider was how they should deal with the existing tenancies. He was bound to say that with the little knowledge he had of the management of Crown lands, he had come to the conclusion that they were managed not in the interest of the farmers, but entirely in the interest of the Exchequer and to furnish it with the very utmost that could be obtained. He had once a client who was a tenant of Crown land, and unfortunately the man was owing the bank some money and was in difficulty. What was the result? The lease under which he occupied the farm when he came into difficulty confiscated his hay, manure, and the buildings which he had put up for improvements. Such a lease he had never seen under any landlord in this kingdom. That lease was current at the time when this House was passing laws for the improvement of the position of agricultural tenants, and it was not altered, notwithstanding that this House was considering what the rights of the tenants ought to be. There was a Liberal Government in office at the time, and it was making the tenant pay under the strictest lease which it was possible to enforce. The present Government had assented to the Land Tenure Bill which had been brought in to improve the position of the tenants in this country. He wished now to ask whether they had set to work at once to rearrange their leases with their own tenants in order that they should be on the good and beneficial terms which they desired to enforce on landlords under the Bill? In his belief the worst landlords in the whole country were the Members of the Houses of Parliament who owned all these lands, and yet leased them and placed the farmers in the very strictest position it was possible for tenants to occupy towards landlords. It seemed to him that when they wanted land for the unemployed the first thing they had to do was to look at home. Before they passed laws to utilise other people's property for small holdings and for the purposes of the Distress Committees, their duty was to look what could be done with their own lands. Could they utilise them for the purposes of the poor and needy, and if they could they should at once at all cost take these lands into their own hands and utilise them for these purposes. Let them at once commence to utilise these lands for small holdings, and for the purposes of the Distress Committees, if they could not be leased to farmers on the terms provided in the Land Tenure Bill. They knew very well that at £1 4s. per acre they could not get land from other parties suitable for these purposes. It would be a disgrace to them as Members of Parliament if they did not utilise the 70,000 acres of land which they had in their own possession in such a way as would be an example to the rest of the kingdom. He found that the expenses of collecting the rental of the Crown lands were about £20,000 and to his mind that was excessive. He did not blame the officials. It was the Treasury who were responsible for dragging every possible penny out of the farmers in order to make a good Budget. The Treasury merely looked at this matter as a monetary affair, and he appealed to them to look at it from the point of view of doing justice to the poor and needy and going away with the feeling that they had done their duty.

*MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead) said the Department was altogether wanting in imagination. These stiff replies did not satisfy some of the Members who desired to do something. With reference to the reply as to the Small Holdings Society in Norfolk, he said that if the officials had any business qualities they would enter into negotiation with the public-spirited gentlemen who were promoting the small holdings movement. He protested against the mechanical way of running Crown lands. He suggested the formation of a Committee of this House with whom the officials might take counsel. The officials seemed to be entirely out of touch with all that was going on around them. They should get to know the gentlemen connected with small holdings associations who were prepared to utilise these lands. The hon. Member for the Everton Division had said that these lands were being run for commercial purposes only. He himself wanted them to be run for commercial purposes, and did not desire to see them run as charitable institutions. His contention was that if they were run in the way suggested they would be more productive. Experience had proved that it was possible to get 25 per cent. more rent out of the land, even after taking into consideration the further capital expenditure which would be needed. It was a policy which would check the decline of the rural population and check the great influx into the large towns of the population. In Germany some steps had been taken in this direction. The public authorities there were prepared to work in harmony with what had been described as public utility societies. It seemed to him that where there was a clear indication that a small holding society in this country was to be run, not from the mere purposes of gain to directors, but to enable public-spirited men to help in solving some of the evils which had been referred to, something more was expected than mere dry official replies. Those public-spirited men were giving much of their lives to this work, and they had a right to expect something like co-operation on sound business lines from the officials of the State.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said the question they were now discussing was one which aroused a good deal of attention in Ireland where for many years they had been striving for the multiplication of small holdings and the placing of the people on the land, and thereby preventing the overcrowding in cities and towns which caused so much distress and misery. It was undoubtedly a difficult thing to get land on which to put the people. That was the difficulty which they were trying to overcome in Ireland, and which they trusted would to a large extent in the immediate future be overcome. In cases such as this, where the Government had control of considerable areas of land eminently suitable for the experiment of small holdings, there was serious ground for complaint when the Government refused to do anything. The reply of the Financial Secretary of the Treasury hardly dealt sufficiently seriously with the problem which had been brought before him by the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division and others. There was not the slightest use of any Minister in any Government, and still less a Radical and Labour Government, or whatever it might be, getting up and speaking on this question in cut and dried official terms. They were confronted with the problem of the unemployed, and with the spectacle of the rural population becoming less every year. Any proposal seriously made to keep the people on the land ought not to be placed on one side in a few official words. It ought to be treated with the greatest possible consideration and sympathy by the Government. When they spoke of the Crown they meant His Majesty. They were supposed in this House not to refer to the Sovereign. Everyone knew that the head of the State if he had his way would be only too delighted to see the people put on the land. Everybody knew very well that no paltry consideration of getting a few pounds more from this or that tenant would influence his mind against any scheme for the creation of small holdings.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not in order in using the Sovereign's name in a way which might influence the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have had the satisfaction of saying what I wanted to say.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That is scarcely a proper remark to make. I told the hon. Member he was out of order, and he rejoices in the fact when he ought rather to have withdrawn.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, with great respect, declined to withdraw, but assured the Chairman that he had not the slightest desire to disregard the authority of the chair in any way. The remarks which were said to be out of order, and which he deliberately declared he did not intend to be out of order, elicited the sympathy of the House, and he ought not to be penalised for making them. If he could not use the name of the Sovereign he would say the Crown, and he hoped that would be in order. The Secretary of the Treasury had said that the Crown was influenced in these matters by the consideration of getting a few pounds more or less from this tenant or from that. That was an unworthy consideration. When the hon. Gentleman opposite, who represented a small holdings association in Lincolnshire, made a representation to the Crown that certain Crown lands could be profitably occupied by small holders, it was not a proper act on the part of the representatives of the Crown to say, "Oh, no; we sympathise greatly with the idea of putting people on the land; we admit the overcrowded state of the cities; we admit that it would be a splendid thing if these Crown lands could be occupied by sturdy toilers of the soil to keep up the rural population, and to give employment, but we cannot allow this because we can get a few pounds more from a single tenant." It was the interest of the representatives of the Crown to see, not that a few pounds more or less were realised, but that the best was done that could be done for the nation at large. He had no doubt that the hon. Member for the Ilkeston division and his friends really meant what they said, but if they wished to make progress in this matter they would go to a division in order to place on record the opinion of Members of the House. The Secretary of the Treasury had given no satisfaction to his hon. friend the hon. Member for North Cork, who had stated the opinion felt on this question by the Nationalist Members. As far as Ireland was concerned there were considerable sums of money over which they had absolutely no control. They had absolutely no information about them. Under the operation of the recent Land Purchase Act a considerable number of the quit rents had been capitalised, and they wanted to know what had become of the redemption money. They know that it was not spent on any Irish purpose whatever. Was it unreasonable for the hon. Member for North Cork to ask the Secretary of the Treasury to give the figures ? The reply given by the Secretary to the Treasury might really have been given by the Secretary to the Treasury in the infamous Tory Government. When he said "infamous" he trusted hon. Gentlemen would understand that he was more anxious to be emphatic than discourteous. It was time that they got something more than officialism with a little sympathy. They expected to have something done by this Government; they could dispense with sympathetic words. It was time in matters of this kind that the Government should do something. They did not want legislation which might be blocked in another place. What they wanted was that in matters which were in the hands of the Government the Government should behave in a thoroughly liberal and sympathetic spirit. Since Parliament met he had been waiting for the Government to show that they were not the same sort of men as composed the last Government, and he had come to the conclusion that there was something really uncanny about the Front Bench. At any rate, as soon as a right hon. or an hon. Gentleman took his seat upon it it was extraordinary how much he looked like every other man who had been there. He really thought that in those matters they should at least get something more than sympathy from the Government. He was anxious to give the Government fair play. He was in the position of a person who, after attending to his religious duties, was in a state of grace and could stand any amount of provocation. That was exactly his state of mind at the present time; but it could not possibly be expected that he would remain in that state for long. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to give a little practical evidence of the great good which they meant to do with their majority. The memory of the Secretary to the Treasury was at fault when he referred to the question of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland. The hon. Gentleman had told the Member for North Cork how much money was spent in Ireland.

*The CHAIRMAN: The Financial Secretary of the Treasury only discussed the revenues and expenditure of the Woods and Forests Department.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that the hon. Gentleman speculated how much money would be spent in Ireland, and in that respect he was entirely out of order, if he might be allowed to say so; but he had no intention of following the example of the hon. Gentleman. He sympathised most heartily with the hon. Gentleman who had raised this question of small holdings, and he would urge him and his friends strongly to make a stand, and if necessary to go into the division lobby, in order to induce a more sympathetic treatment of the question than had been indicated in the speech of the Secretary of the Treasury.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY said this question had two distinct aspects. One was whether these Crown lands should be administered for charitable purposes, and the other was whether they should be administered in the way in which an ordinary estate was administered, viz., to get the best result out of them. He asked the Committee to recognise that there were other interests involved besides those of small holdings. He contended that there was a great deal of unreality about this agitation for small holdings. There were many portions of the country where small holdings would be a curse. He thought it was questionable whether we should be conferring a benefit on the rural labourers by dispossessing the farmer, who was an employer of labour, in order to substitute small holdings. It was the farmer class which had brought this country into the high state of cultivation which all were proud to claim for it. He himself had striven hard to create small holdings, and from experience he could say that just in proportion as they created one kind of occupant of agricultural land they dispossessed another class. At any rate, if a fair solution of the problem were to be reached, both sides should have fair advocacy in this House, and it would ill become those who knew what efforts farmers had made to improve the cultivation of the soil to allow it to go forth that the disappearance of these farmers would be a publi benefit. He hoped that the Government would bear in mind that while it might be right and proper that every effort should be made to encourage the new system of small holdings, the interests of the large farmers should not be neglected.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said that he lived in a part of the country where small holdings extensively prevailed and he knew the immense benefit which they had brought to the district. As an instance of how the Crown lands were administered he would point to a case in which the Department of Woods and Forests had cleared 2,000 acres. They set to work and cut down all the larch on that estate; and the expense of doing so was greater than the return received for the timber. The situation of the land was good, there were admirable roads, and an abundance of water. The Department divided these 2,000 acres into three farms only, and let them for a time at 30s. an acre. But they were compelled afterwards to lower the rent to 10s. an acre, which did not pay the interest on the cost of the buildings. Did the hon. Gentleman opposite mean to say that there was no room for small holdings? He maintained that there was room for hundreds of thousands of people on the soil in occupancy of small holdings.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Member was now discussing the general question of small holdings. He must keep his remarks relevant to the Vote under discussion.

MR. TOMKINSON said his object was to criticise the administration of the Woods and Forests Department. He insisted that it was the consolidation of large farms which had led to agricultural depression in the community, and he had only given an instance which showed how badly the Crown lands had been managed in the past.

*MR. KEIR HARDIE said that the Secretary of the Treasury had stated that these Crown lands were in the personal possession of His Majesty, but he contended that they were the possession of the nation. What had been asked for by the hon. Gentleman who raised this question was not that the Crown lands should be used for experimental purposes, but that they should be utilised for the best advantage of the whole community. He believed that if the number of small holdings on these lands were increased they would yield a greater rental than at present. He wished to refer to the question of the afforestation. The Report of the Departmental Committee which sat on afforestation two or three years ago had been practically a dead letter. Most such Reports were. But in that Report there was one small paragraph which stated that immediate action should be taken, and that there were 21,000,000 acres of waste lands in this country, most of which was available for timber growing. The Report quoted figures to show that in Saxony waste land which was formerly worth only 4s. an acre yielded 38s. an acre when planted with forest trees. The Committee recommended that the Department of Woods and

Forests should take steps to compile a statement of the areas in Great Britain suitable for afforestation; and he asked whether that had been done, so that when the Government decided to begin to afforest the waste places planting operations could begin at once.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said he had heard with surprise the Secretary of the Treasury of this new progressive Government defending the system of giving stereotyped official answers to criticisms which had been made from different parts of the House. The Secretary of the Treasury had told the Committee that this particular Department could not make experiments, from which he gathered that it was the hon. Gentleman's view that the Department would not take a different course from that now followed.

Mr. McKENNA: I made no such statement.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that in that case his memory was evidently at fault. But he would like to tell the Secretary of the Treasury that the leases executed by the Department of Woods and Forests were the most onerous, most oppressive, and the most antiquated in the kingdom.

An HON. MEMBER: Your Party was in power for twenty years; why did they not alter these leases?

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that might be so, but he had not been in power for twenty years, and surely he was entitled to give his views of matters which had come within his own personal observation. The Committee would be rather surprised to hear that this Department did not collect their own rents, but employed agents to do so, who charged a very large commission. He complained that the cost of the management of the Crown estates was not shown in the Report of the Department. He found on the paper that certain expenses were put down for architects and surveyers, but in his dealing with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests he had been obliged to pay the architect's fees himself. Then he found that there was an item for legal expenses; but he could tell the Secretary of the Treasury that those who dealt with the Department were charged for legal expenses, so that it seemed as if somebody were collecting fees twice over. There were evidently several things which the Secretary of the Treasury would require to learn before he had been many more months in office. He knew of a fine Crown property of 2,000 acres, 90 per cent. of which paid no income. A few philanthropic gentlemen in Manchester and Liverpool had put up a sanatorium for dealing with consumptives, and they were charged £4 per acre, which he thought was scandalous. He had come to the conclusion that if there was one Department of the administration of the country which was entirely antediluvian it was that of the Woods and Forests. That Department wanted to be shaken up, and he quite believed that the energy of the Secretary of the Treasury who said that he was going to cut adrift from the hide-bound regulations of the past would be equal to it.

Mr. McKENNA: I never said that, or anything like it.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said that at any rate, from his own experience he had come to the conclusion that this was a Department which required considerable reform.

Mr. McKENNA said that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made a most extraordinary speech. In his opening remarks he had endeavoured to defend the acts of administration of the late Government. No single ground of attack made against him had been made in respect of what he himself had done. His attitude had been to make the best defence he could, and yet hon. Gentlemen opposite who supported the late Government for years had made him the subject of attack because he had made a defence, a lame defence he admitted, of the Estimates of the late Government. He appealed to the Committee whether that was treatment which he ought to receive from hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House. It had been suggested that he was not in sympathy with the policy of small holdings. That impression was a mistaken one. He had stated that the Government were fully in sympathy with the policy of extending small holdings, and that policy would be steadily pursued, always consistently with the welfare of the present tenants, which was a duty imposed on him and on the Government.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) moved that the Chairman should report Progress and ask leave to sit again. He wanted to discuss this Vote, not so much in regard to the past as in regard to the future, but had had no opportunity of doing so.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Morton.*)

And, it being Midnight, the Motion to report Progress lapsed without Question put.

And the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to, Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill, Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

WALLIS'S DIVORCE BILL.

That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Wallis's Divorce Bill, as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 29th March; *Mr. Secretary Gladstone*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 98.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said: On this Motion, I desire to ask a Question of the Under-Secretary for the Colonies—namely, whether he has any information to the effect that the Government of Natal have resigned, or tendered their resignation, and, if so, whether he can state the reasons which have led them to take this action.

*MR. J. R. MACDONALD (Leicester) asked whether the reports they had received in this country of certain Natal events which had happened yesterday and the day before were true. Those who had been following, week by week the course of public opinion in Natal understood that, at the present moment, that opinion was in a very dangerous and inflamed state. Consequently, he thought it was fair to say that martial law, carried out to the extreme capital sentence, ought to be very carefully revised by His Majesty's Government. He hoped the Under-Secretary for the Colonies would give the House an assurance that His Majesty's Government would demand that full information should be placed before them in regard to the sentences that had been passed by the Courts established under martial law, and that those sentences would be considered in cold blood, and not under conditions such as, unfortunately, existed in Natal at the present time. He was the very last person, however, who would suggest for a moment that His Majesty's Government should interfere with the legitimate constitutional liberties of any of our Colonies. It was because he desired those constitutional liberties to be real and unassailable, when any unwarrantable attempt was made to assail them, that he hoped His Majesty's Government would recognise their grave responsibility to this country by revising the capital sentence passed on twelve natives under these inflamed conditions of public opinion. He hoped the Government would give the House an assurance that they would not allow the sentence to be carried out without the fullest investigation into the circumstances attending the act for which sentence had been passed.

MR. CHURCHILL said he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent, and to the hon. Member below the gangway, for having given him notice of the points they wished to raise. He would also acknowledge generally the moderation and caution which had characterised the observations of the hon. Member for Leicester. In reply he had to say that the Colonial Office yesterday received the following telegram from Sir Henry McCallum—

> "Court-martial which tried murderers of police officers have sentenced twelve prisoners to be shot out of twenty-four tried for the offence. Proceedings of court-martial have been carefully reviewed by Governor in Council. The proceedings being in order and no injustice committed, I have accepted the unanimous advice of my Ministers that sentence shall be carried into effect. Another court-martial passed sentence of death on seven other natives, but as actions with which they were charged were not immediately connected with actual attack on police, the sentence in this case has been commuted."

Lord Elgin immediately telegraphed—in some reports in the newspapers it was suggested that Lord Elgin was not the author of the telegram, and he need scarcely say that he himself would be guilty of no such unwarrantable presumption as to send a telegram on his own responsibility upon a matter of high State importance of this character—Lord Elgin telegraphed to the Governor of Natal asking for information and for a postponement of the execution of the sentences pending information. Had he not done so the twelve men who had been sentenced would have been shot at noon this day. He need scarcely say that His Majesty's Government had no intention of standing between persons convicted of murder and their proper punishment by law. They had no intention of invading the legitimate discretion of a responsible self-governing Colony, and certainly His Majesty's Government were not actuated by any want of sympathy with the people of Natal in the long and anxious trials through which they had been passing during the last three or four weeks. He thought that every one in the House who considered the question for a moment would see that a population not very numerous and in parts widely scattered, dwelling amongst a vast native population, must regard anything in the nature of turbulence and unrest as a matter which was of the most urgent and vital consequence to them and to all dependent upon them; but, having regard to the fact that it was the duty of the Government, from which they did not in any way recede, in the face of anything like a general native rising, or any serious emergency occurring, to come to the aid of the colonists of Natal with the armed power of the Crown, he thought it was not unreasonable that they should ask to be fully informed of any action taken under martial law for which an Act of Indemnity must ultimately receive the Royal Assent and of all steps involving life and death after the most imminent character of the emergency had passed away, before those steps had become irrevocable. Hon. Members had no doubt read in the newspapers the telegrams the Press agencies had sent to this country. He had at this moment nothing to add either by way of amplification or confirmation to those telegrams with regard to the action of the Natal Cabinet. Perhaps it might be possible to make a statement to-morrow or on Monday; but His Majesty's Government did not apprehend that any serious or grave constitutional issue would be raised. They had every reason to expect that the matter would be dealt with on both sides with composure and good feeling, and they believed that in following the path they had entered upon in sober integrity they would command and receive the support of the House of Commons.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that the hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question whether the Executive Government of Natal had resigned or tendered its resignation.

MR. CHURCHILL: I said distinctly that I had nothing to add in the way of official information to the telegrams published in the newspapers, and when I have official information on the subject I shall take the earliest opportunity of conveying it. [Cries of "Is it true?"]

SIR GILBERT PARKER asked whether the Government had received, through the Governor of Natal, the resignation of the Natal Government.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir.

SIR GILBERT PARKER asked whether the Natal Government had tendered its resignation. [Cries of "Answer."] He protested that the hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question which had been put to him. He would again press the hon. Gentleman. What they wished to know was whether the Natal Government had tendered its resignation through the Governor—whether the Government had information upon the point.

MR. CHURCHILL said that the Government had no information which could be imparted to the House. [Cries of "Oh!"]

*MR. EVELYN CECIL asked how the Government of Natal was to be carried on if no Ministry could be induced to take office.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said it was perfectly evident that a very grave occurrence had taken place, and it was also perfectly evident that the Government had received information which they were not able to impart to the House. [AN HON. MEMBER: Then why press for it?] He had a Question to ask. There was evidence to make the House believe that the Government of Natal had strong views on this question. He did not wonder that they had because, as the right hon. Gentleman said, the situation in Natal was very grave, and also this was a matter which had again and again been decided constitutionally in a sense which appeared to be entirely at variance with the action taken here. The law as he understood it was that in all our Colonies this prerogative must be exercised by the Governor on the advice of his own Ministers. The Governor had accepted the advice of the Ministry, but something had intervened which prevented the carrying out of the will of the Ministry and Government of Natal. The population of Natal was 82,000 whites and 956,000 natives, and it might be a very serious matter that the news should go out from this country that the whole constitutional machinery of Natal had been arrested by a telegram from England, admittedly sent without full knowledge of the facts, and admittedly contrary to the advice of the responsible advisers of the Crown in Natal. How long was this situation to last? Were His Majesty's Government prepared to take the full responsibility for any calamity that might occur as the result of this very unusual and very unconstitutional interference with the Government of a self-governing Colony? He did not think they had been ill-advised in raising this point. There was great urgency in not allowing human life to be sacrificed without endeavouring to ascertain what might be put forward on behalf of those accused. Still they ought to consider whether by interfering with the course of justice they might not be inflicting greater injury and by solacing their own views be acting contrary to the constitutional practice.

MR. STANLEY WILSON asked why it had been left to an Under-Secretary to answer this most important Question. It was an insult to the House of Commons that the Leader of the House should absent himself from their debates at such a time.

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned at Twenty-six minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

ESTIMATES FOR CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1906-7.

MEMORANDUM BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY.

I.—CIVIL SERVICES.

1. The net total of the Estimates for Civil Services for 1906–7 is 29,316,629*l.* The net total of the original Estimates for 1905–6 was 28,614,221*l.* The increase is therefore 702,408*l.*, of which 651,117*l.* arises under Class IV. (Education, Science and Art).

2. In the following Abstract and throughout the detailed Estimates comparison is made, according to the usual practice, with the total grants made for the service of the year 1905–6 in the Session of 1905. Thus the figures for 1905–6 comprise, in addition to the original Estimates for the year, Supplementary Estimates to the amount of 51,752*l.*, which were presented in the summer of 1905. The result (allowing for a reduction of 100*l.* made in Committee of Supply in the Vote for the Irish Land Commission) is a net total for 1905–6 of 28,665,873*l.* On this basis of comparison the Estimates for 1906–7 show an increase of 650,756*l.*

3. The number of Votes is 103, being two less than the original number for 1905–6. The Vote for Merchant Seaman's Fund Pensions has been removed, owing to the small figure at which it now stands, from Class VI. and merged in the Mercantile Marine Services Vote (Class II.), and there is one Vote less to be met under Class VII., Miscellaneous.

CLASS I.

4. The total sum required under Public Works and Buildings is 2,790,280*l.*, being an increase of 86,247*l.* on the amount voted (including a Supplementary Estimate of 3,150*l.* for Houses of Parliament Buildings, and a sum of 3,172*l.* transferred from the Vote for the Board of Education) in 1905. The increase this year is attributable in the main to a few large items of expenditure for which provision has to be made, as below mentioned, under the Votes for Art and Science Buildings and for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

5. The increase of 3,500*l.* under Royal Palaces is due to the relatively large provision required for works of repair and for drainage. The expenditure of 2,500*l.* however on the house (late Ranger's Lodge) in Hyde Park will be recovered from the occupant by an annual charge. On Osborne there is an increase of 1,500*l.*, due chiefly to new works, as explained in the Estimate, which are necessary to meet the requirements of the institution as a convalescent home for officers of the Navy and Army, who are availing themselves of it in increasing numbers. Houses of Parliament Buildings show a decrease of 8,050*l.* on the Vote of last year, which, however, was increased exceptionally by a special payment of 10,000*l.* for the purchase of 29, Abingdon Street, under the Westminster Improvement Scheme.

6. Under Art and Science Buildings there is a net increase of 23,628*l.*, which is more than accounted for by the sums required for fittings, furniture, lighting, &c., in the new building of the Royal College of Science. Provision has been made in the Diplomatic and Consular Buildings Estimate for the purchase and adaptation of a Legation House at Christiania, which, with growing requirements in China and Japan, necessitate a further increase, to the extent of 7,100*l.*, in that Estimate.

7. There is a net decrease of 11,700*l.* under Revenue Buildings. 20,000*l.* less has been taken for Post Office and Telegraph Buildings (Subheads K. and O.) namely, 380,000*l.* as against 400,000*l.* in 1905–6. On the other hand the provision for Purchase of Sites under the Post Office Estimate (Subhead H.) has been raised by 25,000*l.*, to the figure (110,000*l.*) at which it stood in 1904–5, last year's provision having proved insufficient for the requirements of the service.

8. The Estimate for Public Buildings, Great Britain, shows an increase of 53,000*l.*, several large services falling to be met in the ensuing year, among which may be mentioned the completion of Hendon Vaccine Station, 23,200*l.*; continuation of erection of new official residences for the first Lord and the Senior Naval Lord of the Admiralty, 13,340*l.*; Magnetic Observatory, Eskdale Muir, 12,000*l.* The increase of 15,785*l.* in the Subhead for Furniture is mainly due to the provision which will be required in the year for removals to, and partial furnishing of, the new War Office and Admiralty. Against the increase of 10,048*l.* for Annuities in respect of capital outlay there is a set-off, to the extent of 6,076*l.*, in a decrease under Rents.

9. The increase of 6,928*l.* under Surveys of the United Kingdom is due to the transfer to that Vote of 3,000*l.* from Army Votes in respect of pay of Engineer Officers employed on the Ordnance Survey, and to the increased requirements of other Public Departments, as shown in the Appendix to the Estimate. The increase of 19,361*l.* in the Estimate for Rates on Government Property is due, as in past years, in part to the larger amount of Government property in respect of which contributions are made and in part to the increased poundage of the rates themselves. There is a decrease of 8,032*l.* under the Public Works and Buildings, Ireland, Estimate, the requirements of the Admiralty for Coast Guard Buildings, &c., in Ireland this year being less by about 10,000*l.* than in the preceding year.

CLASS II.

10. The total Estimate under this Class (Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments) is 2,746,285*l.*, being an increase of 5,822*l.* on the amount voted in the Session of 1905. The provision for Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, amounting to 2,100*l.* For 1906-7, has been transferred from Class VI. to this Class and is included in the Estimate for Mercantile Marine Services.

11. Under Home Office there is an increase of 15,456*l.*, of which 14,950*l.* is for salaries and expenses in connection with the administration of the Aliens Act, 1905. Under Privy Council Office a net increase of 1,920*l.* is accounted for by the provision of salary for the Lord President of the Council, that office being now held as a separate office. The Board of Trade Estimate shows a net increase of 5,448*l.*, an additional sum of 4,500*l.* being provided for Special Inquiries on subjects connected with Trade and the Labour Market (Subhead P.), and 5,440*l.* more being required for increase of staff, including increments, in the Patent Office consequent on the Patents Act, 1902, and the Trade Marks Acts, 1905. Under Board of Agriculture and Fisheries there is an increase of 9,730*l.*, which depends, to the extent of 5,000*l.*, on the annual allocation between Great Britain and Ireland of the statutory grant of 50,000*l.* for the suppression of Swine Fever under the provisions of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, and is otherwise due, apart from increments of salary, to temporary work on the collection of Fishery Statistics undertaken in connection with the North Sea Fisheries Investigation, for which a Grant in aid is provided under Class IV., Vote 6. The increase of 1,976*l.* under Public Works Loan Commission is due to a decrease in the estimated number of applications for loans and a consequent falling off in the extra receipts which are appropriated in aid of the Vote. The Estimate for Office of Works and Public Buildings is increased by 5,883*l.*, of which sum approximately one half represents the provision required for normal increments of salary, and half for proposed increases of staff to meet growth of work, for which scales of pay are not yet allocated.

12. Against the foregoing increases may be set the following decreases. In the Estimate for the House of Commons Office retirements and a slight increase in the estimate of fees on Private Bills effect a decrease of 2,600*l.* On Stationery and Printing there is a decrease of 11,803*l.* The real decrease, however, is approximately 39,000*l.*, as the cost of supplies to the County Courts, to the amount of 27,400*l.* for 1906–7, has been transferred to this Vote from the Vote for County Courts (Class III, 5). For Secret Service 15,000*l.* less has been taken than in the previous year. Under the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, Ireland, 5,000*l.* less is required for Swine Fever purposes, the proportion of the statutory grant for that purpose allocated to Great Britain being increased for 1906–7 by that amount (see under Board of Agriculture above), and the Grants for Examples, School Accessories, &c., which were exceptionally continued for a period of five years in 1901–2, lapse. On the other hand there is an increase in the estimate for Grants for Day Secondary Schools, together with some increases of staff, &c., the net result being a decrease of 1,546*l.* on the Estimate as a whole. There is a decrease of 2,531*l.* under Local Government Board for Ireland owing to the special provision for Relief of Distress which was made in 1905–6, and to a smaller amount being required in the ensuing year for Inquiries. The Estimate for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland, is reduced by the contribution which is expected to be received from the Corporation of Belfast towards the cost of re-valuation.

The estimated extra receipts from the Mint, which have declined in recent years, show a marked increase owing to an increased demand for silver coinage.

CLASS III.

13. The total sum required under the head of Law and Justice is 3,888,894*l.*, being a net increase of 28,688*l.* on the total for 1905–6. The principal increase is on the Estimate for the Irish Land Commission, where 60,900*l.* more is required, of which 45,000*l.* is for additional provision for dividends and sinking fund on guaranteed 2¾ per cent. stock for the Land Purchase Aid Fund under Section 47 (2) of the Irish Land Act, 1903, and the remainder (apart from increments, &c.) is for increase of staff to meet further developments.

14. Under County Courts there is a nominal decrease of 7,993*l.* (with estimated extra receipts of 9,393*l.*), but if the cost of printing and stationery, which has been transferred to the Stationery Office Estimate, be included, there is an actual increase of 10,014*l.*, due to an increase of 7,895*l.* in the estimate of Expenses and a decrease of 2,119*l.* in the estimate of Fees. Under Prisons, England and the Colonies, there is a decrease of 22,188*l.*, owing to the completion of new works at Brixton and Maidstone, which admits of a reduction of 16,293*l.* under Subhead M., and to a slight decrease in the estimated average number of prisoners. The Estimate for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain, shows a decrease of 5,822*l.* Under Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum there is an increase of 3,315*l.*, owing to the necessity for providing additional accommodation.

15. Following on reductions of 52,394*l.* in 1904–5, and 40,195*l.* in 1905–6, the Estimate for the Royal Irish Constabulary this year shows an increase of 10,625*l.* The decrease of 7,874*l.* under Prisons, Ireland, is due to the special provision of 10,000*l.* which was made in 1905–6 in respect of a recoupment to the Local Authorities of arrears of expenditure on certain lunatics other than criminal lunatics, as explained in paragraph 16 of the Memorandum which preceded the Estimates for 1905–6.

CLASS IV.

16. For Education, Science, and Art the total Estimate is 16,978,282*l.*, being an increase of 651,117*l.* on the grants for 1905–6, following on an increase of 533,409*l.* in the preceding year.

17. The increase under Board of Education is 490,224*l.*, of which 371,224*l.* is mainly automatic in character, and is due, as in the previous year, to anticipated

growth in the number of scholars in average attendance, and to the larger number of teachers for whose training provision is made by the State. The remainder is in respect of provision to the extent of 32,000*l.* under Subhead D. 3, for increased grants towards the expenses of Pupil Teachers under instruction, and of 87,000*l.* under Subhead E. 1, for increased grants to Secondary Schools. Of the increase (154,838*l.*) under Public Education, Scotland, 100,000*l.* is a re-vote, included in the Estimate as an exceptional arrangement, in respect of unspent balances on the grants for the two previous years under the General Aid Grant (Subhead J.) ; the remainder is automatic in character. The principal increase, namely, 36,223*l.* in the Annual Grant (Subhead E.), is due in part to the normal growth of the average attendance generally, and in part to the larger number of scholars earning grants at the highest rates in consequence of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1901, which, for the time being, caused an abnormal increase in the attendance of children over twelve. In the Estimate for Scientific Investigations, &c., the grant in aid of equipment for the National Physical Laboratory has been increased from 5,000*l.* to 10,000*l.*, and a new grant of 2,000*l.* has been included in the Universities and Colleges Estimate in aid of Sheffield University.

CLASS V.

18. The Estimates for Foreign and Colonial Services amount to 1,859,305*l.*, and show a net decrease of 68,140*l.*, following on a net decrease of 142,093*l.* in the preceding year ; or, if the Estimates for the Treasury Chest Fund be deducted (a service for which the necessary provision cannot be determined until after the close of the financial year), the decrease on the original Estimates of 1905–6 is 53,890*l.*, following on a decrease of 93,093*l.* in the preceding year. Under Colonial Services there is a net decrease of 68,751*l.*, the principal decreases being 50,000*l.* on the grant in aid of British East Africa and 34,000*l.* on the grant in aid of Somaliland, while no grant is required this year to supplement the general revenues of the West Indian Islands, for which 70,000*l.* was voted in 1905–6. A grant of 10,000*l.* is included in this Estimate in aid of the expenses of representing the United Kingdom at the International Exhibition to be opened at Christchurch, New Zealand, in November, 1906.

19. Under Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable there is a net increase of 2,852*l.* The subsidy to the African Direct Telegraph Company lapses in September, 1906. The saving under this head is, however, counterbalanced by increased expenditure on the establishment of offices in Australia in connection with the Pacific Cable. For Cyprus a grant in aid of 28,000*l.* is proposed, as against one of 16,000*l.* in 1905-6.

CLASS VI.

20. In this Class (Non-effective and Charitable Services) is included a Vote of 122,644*l.* to make good deficiencies on the income accounts of the funds for Savings Banks and Friendly Societies, which, compared with the Vote for the same purpose in 1905–6, shows a decrease of 24,345*l.* The Vote for Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions has been included in the Vote for Mercantile Marine Services under Class II. There is an increase of 10,591*l.* under Superannuation and Retired Allowances, and a net decrease on the total for the Class of 13,857*l.*

CLASS VII.

21. Miscellaneous Estimates show a net decrease of 39,121*l.* There is an increase of 14,196*l.* under Temporary Commissions, but special Votes in 1905–6 of 20,000*l.* for the visit to India of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and of 20,000*l.* for Relief of Distress in Ireland, account for a decrease of 40,000*l.*

An Estimate for Repayments to the Civil Contingencies Fund will be presented as usual later in the Session, if necessary, when the amount to be made good to the Fund has been ascertained.

II.—REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

22. The net total of the Estimates for the Revenue Departments is 19,958,941*l.*, an increase of 523,466*l.* on the total for 1905–6.

23. The Estimate for Customs shows a net increase of 28,100*l.*, of which 5,044*l.* is due to increased charges for superannuations, 2,000*l.* to increased provision for construction of vessels, and the remainder, apart from normal increments, to improvements of pay, etc., given in 1905 to the lower ranks of the Waterguard and the Non-established staff. The Inland Revenue Estimate shows a net increase of 23,500*l.*, which is accounted for partly by growth of business and the necessity of making further provision to meet it, and partly by improvements of pay recently granted to the subordinate staff in the Warehousing and Stamping Departments.

24. Following the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee of last Session, the estimates for the Post Office (Vote III.) Packet Services (Vote IV.) and Telegraphs (Vote V.) have been amalgamated, and the Estimate for 1906–7 (Vote III.) covers the three services.

Compared with the Vote for the current year, the grand total shows a net increase of 471,866*l.*, made up as follows :—

Postal Services - - - - - -	Increase	372,547*l.*
Packet Services - - - - - -	Decrease	50,696*l.*
Telegraph Services - - - - - -	Increase	150,015*l.*
Net Increase - - -		471,866*l.*

The increase under " Postal Services " is mainly due to normal causes incidental to the expansion of business, viz., increments in Salaries and Wages, growth of Staff, increased expenditure for Electric Light, New Works and Superannuation Charges. In addition, the full rental for the Christ's Hospital site becomes payable as from April, 1906, while the provision for Purchase of Sites (Subhead H.), which was exceptionally reduced in 1905–6, has been restored to the figure at which it stood in 1904–5.

As regards " Packet Services," the decrease is chiefly due to the cessation of the contracts for the West Indian and Canadian Pacific Services. There is, on the other hand, a considerable reduction in Appropriations in Aid, due to the cessation of the contributions formerly made by various Colonies towards the cost of the above Services.

Of the increase under " Telegraph Services," 70,536*l.* is on account of the terminable annuities issued in repayment of sums borrowed on Telephone Capital Account, the balance being mainly due to increments in Salaries and Wages, growth of Staff and the rapid development of the Telephone system.

As the result of fresh Statistics the Telegraph proportion of the expenses common to the Postal and Telegraph Services has been further reduced to 23½ per cent. as against 24 per cent. in the previous year.

REGINALD McKENNA.

Whitehall, Treasury Chambers,
2nd March, 1906.

APPENDIX II.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLIV.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army (Annual)		All stages 29th March (1503)
*Consolidated Fund (No. 1)		Read 1ª 27th March (992) All remaining stages 29th March (1408)
Conveyancing [H.L.]	*Lord Reay*	Read 1ª 29th March (1408)
*Criminal Appeal [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1ª 22nd March (516) Read 2ª 27th March (992)
*Judicature [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 3ª and passed 19th March (50)
Limited Partnerships [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Committee } Report } 22nd March (532)
Married Women's Property [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 1ª 29th March (1408)
Merchant Shipping Act Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Muskerry*	Read 1ª 19th March (5)
*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 3ª and passed 19th March (5)
Patent Designs and Trade Marks (Registration of Patent Agents) [H.L.]	*Lord Coleridge*	Read 2ª 26th March (808) Committee } Report } 27th March (992)
Poisons and Pharmacy [H.L.]	*Earl of Crewe*	Read 2ª 20th March (178)

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Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
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Public Health Acts Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Hylton*	Read 2^{a} 22nd March (518) Committee Report } 29th March (1408)
Public Libraries Extension [H.L.]	*Lord James of Hereford*	Bill withdrawn 22nd March (532)
*Public Trustee [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^{a} 22nd March (516) Read 2^{a} 27th March (1008)
Settled Land [H.L.]	*Lord Davey*	Read 1^{a} 29th March (1407)
*Wireless Telegraphy		Read 1^{a} 29th March (1503)

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Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 1^{o} 19th March (175) Read 2^{o} 26th March (979) Committee Report } 27th March (1186) Read 3^{o} and passed 28th March (1390)
Aliens	*Mr. O'Grady*	Read 1^{o} 21st March (398)
*Alkali etc. Works	*Mr. John Burns*	Read 1^{o} 19th March (101)
Allotments (London)	*Mr. J. Benn*	Read 1^{o} 20th March (236)
Building Lands (Scotland)	*Mr. Munro Ferguson*	Read 1^{o} 29th March (1563)
Clerks of the Peace and County Council	*Mr. Lutterell*	Read 1^{o} 29th March (1563)
*Consolidated Fund (No. 1)	*Mr. Asquith*	Read 1^{o} 20th March (344) Read 2^{o} 21st March (399) Committee Report } 22nd March (731) Read 3^{o} and passed 26th March (975)
Contempt of Court (Ireland)	*Mr. Nolan*	Bill withdrawn 21st March (398)
*Crown Lands	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 1^{o} 27th March (1086)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Dean Forest	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 1° 27th March (1086)
Deputy Clerks of the Peace	*Sir J. Woodhouse*	Read 1° 29th March (1563)
*Dogs	*Sir Ed. Strachey*	Read 2° 27th March (1143)
Education of Defective Children (Scotland)	*Mr. Gulland*	Read 1° 27th March (1087)
Factory and Workshop	*Mr. John Tennant*	Read 1° 21st March (511)
Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment	*Mr. Cameron Corbett*	Read 1° 29th March (1562)
House Letting (Scotland)	*Mr. Cross*	Read 1° 19th March (101)
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Land Values Taxation (Scotland)	*Mr. Sutherland*	Read 2° 23rd March (742)
*Local Authorities (Transfer of Treasury Powers)	*Mr. McKenna*	Read 1° 27th March (1087)
London Municipal Elections Hours of Poll	*Mr. Dickinson*	Read 1° 26th March (886)
Merchant Shipping Act Amendment (No. 2)	*Mr. Lloyd-George*	Read 1° 20th March (237) Read 2° 27th March (1089)
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*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*Mr. E. Robertson*	Read 1° 23rd March (804)
Petroleum	*Mr. J. W. Benn*	Read 1° 26th March (886)
*Police Superannuation	*Mr. H. Samuel*	Read 2° 26th March (934)
*Post Office (Money Orders)	*Mr. Buxton*	Read 2° 26th March (938) (964)
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*Reserve Forces	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 1° 26th March (885)
*Seamen and Soldiers False Characters	*Mr. Haldane*	Read 1° 26th March (885)
Shop Clubs Act (1902) Amendment	*Mr. John Ward*	Read 1° 27th March (1807)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
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Small Tenants (Scotland)	*Mr. Munro Fergusson*	Read 1° 29th March (1563)
Sunday Trading (Scotland)	*Mr. Cameron Corbett*	Read 1° 27th March (1087)
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*Trade Disputes	*Sir John Walton*	Read 1° 28th March (1295)
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*Wireless Telegraphy	*Mr. Buxton*	Consideration as amended 26th March (965) Read 3° and passed 27th March (1143)
*Workmen's Compensation	*Mr. Gladstone*	Read 1° 26th March (886)

APPENDIX III.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1906.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in previous Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Board of Education,—Copy of Order of the Board of Education, amending Final Order No. 1130 under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [2 Edw. VII., c. 42, s. 11 (8)]	20 March	30 sitting days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Hairdressers' and Barbers' Shops within the Borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)].	20 March	40 days
Education (Scotland),—Copy of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 19th March 1906, providing for the distribution of the General Aid Grant [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67].	26 March	One month
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the Borough of Barnstaple, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for Hairdressers' Shops within the Borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)].	27 March	40 days
Trade Marks Act, 1905,—Copy of Statutory Rules and Orders made by the Board of Trade, dated 24th March 1906, under The Trade Marks Act, 1905 [5 Edw. VII., c. 15, s. 60].	29 March	40 days

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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